

re Saint Anne



a collection of short works about Saint Anne

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Articles



New Catholic Dictionary - Saint Anne

(Hebrew: grace) Traditional name of the wife of Joachim and mother of the Blessed Virgin. No records of her life are found outside of the apocryphal literature, the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew and the Protoevangelium of James. From these we learn that Anne and Joachim had reached old age and still remained childless; their prayers were answered, an angel of the Lord announcing to Anne that the fruit of her womb would be blessed by all the world. The belief that Anne, in the conception and birth of Mary, remained a virgin was condemned by the Holy See, 1677. Devotion to her, popular from an early date in the East, began in the West at Douai and spread rapidly through the Church after 1584. There are shrines to her in many churches, and those at Saint Anne d'Auray, Brittany, and Saint Anne de Beaupre, Canada, are popular places of pilgrimage. Patroness of Brittany, France, Canada, housewives, women in labor, cabinet-makers, and miners. Emblem: a door. Feast, Roman Calendar, 26 July.

The Book of Saints, by Father Lawrence George Lovasik

Saint Anne

July 26

Anne was the mother of the Blessed Virgin, and the grandmother of Jesus Christ.

She and her husband, Joachim, were very devoted to God. They lived in Nazareth. They had no children, and that was believed to be a punishment of God among the Jews. They prayed to God and begged Him to give them a child. She promised to give her child to God's service.



Their prayers were heard even though Anne was already too old to have children. A daughter was born to Anne, and she called her Miriam or "Mary." Anne offered her child to God at a very early age.

Mary spent some years helping in the Temple. When she returned to Nazareth the Archangel Gabriel appeared to her and told her that she would be the Mother of the Son of God.

Saint Anne's name means "grace." God gave her special graces, and the greatest was that she was the mother of the Mother of God. Saint Anne is the patron of mothers and of children. Her prayers to Jesus and Mary are very powerful.

The Book of Saints, by the Monks of Ramsgate

(Saint) Mother of Our Blessed Lady (July 26) (1st century)
Saints Joachim and Anne, both of the tribe of Juda and of the Royal House of David, are venerated by the Church as the parents of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is believed that Mary was their only child, and the Mary mentioned in the Gospels as the sister of the Mother of God was in reality only her cousin, such manner of speaking being not unusual in the East. Holy Scripture makes no mention of Saints Joachim and Anne, but they have been honoured by the Church as Saints from early times. Churches were dedicated under their patronage, and the Fathers, especially those of the Oriental Churches, dilate on their privileges. The relics of Saint Anne are said to have been brought from Palestine to Constantinople in the eighth century. Saint Anne is usually represented as teaching her little daughter to read the Scriptures.

Catholic Encyclopedia - Saint Anne

Anne (Hebrew, Hannah, grace; also spelled Ann, Anne, Anna) is the traditional name of the mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

All our information concerning the names and lives of Saints Joachim and Anne, the parents of Mary, is derived from apocryphal literature, the Gospel of the Nativity of Mary, the Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew and the Protoevangelium of James. Though the earliest form of the latter, on which directly or indirectly the other two seem to be based, goes back to about A.D. 150, we can hardly accept as beyond doubt its various statements on its sole authority. In the Orient the Protoevangelium had great authority and portions of it were read on the feasts of Mary by the Greeks, Syrians, Copts, and Arabians. In the Occident, however, it was rejected by the Fathers of the Church until its contents were incorporated by Jacobus de Voragine in his "Golden Legend" in the thirteenth century. From that time on the story of Saint Anne spread over the West and was amply developed, until Saint Anne became one of the most popular saints also of the Latin Church.

The Protoevangelium gives the following account: In Nazareth there lived a rich and pious couple, Joachim and Hannah. They were childless. When on a feast day Joachim presented himself to offer sacrifice in the temple, he was repulsed by a certain Ruben, under the pretext that men without offspring were unworthy to be admitted. Whereupon Joachim, bowed down with grief, did not return home, but went into the mountains to make his plaint to God in solitude. Also Hannah, having learned the reason of the prolonged absence of her husband, cried to the Lord to take

away from her the curse of sterility, promising to dedicate her child to the service of God. Their prayers were heard; an angel came to Hannah and said: "Hannah, the Lord has looked upon thy tears; thou shalt conceive and give birth and the fruit of thy womb shall be blessed by all the world". The angel made the same promise to Joachim, who returned to his wife. Hannah gave birth to a daughter whom she called Miriam (Mary). Since this story is apparently a reproduction of the biblical account of the conception of Samuel, whose mother was also called Hannah, even the name of the mother of Mary seems to be doubtful.

The renowned Father John of Eck of Ingolstadt, in a sermon on Saint Anne (published at Paris in 1579), pretends to know even the names of the parents Saint Anne. He calls them Stollanus and Emerentia. He says that Saint Anne was born after Stollanus and Emerentia had been childless for twenty years; that Saint Joachim died soon after the presentation of Mary in the temple; that Saint Anne then married Cleophas, by whom she became the mother of Mary Cleophae (the wife of Alphaeus and mother of the Apostles James the Lesser, Simon and Judas, and of Joseph the Just); after the death of Cleophas she is said to have married Salomas, to whom she bore Maria Salomae (the wife of Zebedaeus and mother of the Apostles John and James the Greater). The same spurious legend is found in the writings of Gerson and of many others. There arose in the sixteenth century an animated controversy over the marriages of Saint Anne, in which Baronius and Bellarmine defended her monogamy. The Greek Menaea (25 July) call the parents of Saint Anne Mathan and Maria, and relate that Salome and Elizabeth, the mother of Saint John the Baptist, were daughters of two sisters of Saint Anne. According to Ephiphanius it was maintained even in the fourth century by some enthusiasts that Saint Anne conceived without the action of man. This error was revived in the West in the fifteenth century. (Anna

conceptit per osculum Joachimi.) In 1677 the Holy See condemned the error of Imperiali who taught that Saint Anne in the conception and birth of Mary remained virgin (Benedict XIV, De Festis, II, 9). In the Orient the cult of Saint Anne can be traced to the fourth century. Justinian I (died 565) had a church dedicated to her. The canon of the Greek Office of Saint Anne was composed by Saint Theophanes (died 817), but older parts of the Office are ascribed to Anatolius of Byzantium (d. 458). Her feast is celebrated in the East on the 25th day of July, which may be the day of the dedication of her first church at Constantinople or the anniversary of the arrival of her supposed relics in Constantinople (710). It is found in the oldest liturgical document of the Greek Church, the Calendar of Constantinople (first half of the eighth century). The Greeks keep a collective feast of Saint Joachim and Saint Anne on the 9th of September. In the Latin Church Saint Anne was not venerated, except, perhaps, in the south of France, before the thirteenth century. Her picture, painted in the eighth century, which was found lately in the church of Santa Maria Antiqua in Rome, owes its origin to Byzantine influence. Her feast, under the influence of the "Golden Legend", is first found (26 July) in the thirteenth century, e.g. at Douai (in 1291), where a foot of Saint Anne was venerated (feast of translation, 16 September). It was introduced in England by Urban VI, 21 November 1378, from which time it spread all over the Western Church. It was extended to the universal Latin Church in 1584.

The supposed relics of Saint Anne were brought from the Holy Land to Constantinople in 710 and were still kept there in the church of Saint Sophia in 1333. The tradition of the church of Apt in southern France pretends that the body of Saint Anne was brought to Apt by Saint Lazarus, the friend of Christ, was hidden by Saint Auspicius (died 398), and found again during the reign of Charlemagne (feast, Monday

after the octave of Easter); these relics were brought to a magnificent chapel in 1664 (feast, 4 May). The head of Saint Anne was kept at Mainz up to 1510, when it was stolen and brought to Düren in Rheinland. Saint Anne is the patroness of Brittany. Her miraculous picture (feast, 7 March) is venerated at Notre Dame d'Auray, Diocese of Vannes. Also in Canada, where she is the principal patron of the province of Quebec, the shrine of Saint Anne de Beaupré is well known. Saint Anne is patroness of women in labour; she is represented holding the Blessed Virgin Mary in her lap, who again carries on her arm the child Jesus. She is also patroness of miners, Christ being compared to gold, Mary to silver.

Saint Anne, by Maud Lynch

"What shall find a valiant woman? Far and from the utmost bounds is her price. The heart of her husband trusteth in her and she shall render him good, not evil, all the days of her life. . . . She hath considered a field, and bought it: with the fruit of her hands she hath planted a vineyard. She hath girded her loins with power and hath strengthened her arm. She hath put out her hand to strong things and her fingers have taken hold of the spindle. She hath opened her hand to the needy and stretched out her hands to the poor. . . . Strength and beauty are her clothing. . . . She hath opened her mouth to wisdom, and the law of clemency is on her tongue. . . . Her children have risen up and called her blessed; her husband, and he hath praised her. Many daughters have gathered riches, thou hast surpassed them all." (*Proverbs 31*)

When we turn to the contemplation of Saint Anne and seek to find out authentic facts and information concerning her, we, naturally, examine the Scripture to find what we are seeking, and what do we find? In the Gospels and New Testament we find almost complete silence regarding her and, indeed, very little more of Our Lady herself. It is as if, in those brief accounts, the Evangelist's whole mind and attention was bent on giving as much detail as possible of Our Lord's life and words and activities and had little space for anything else.

The Gospels then are silent and to what source shall we go for information and enlightenment? Most of our knowledge and information concerning the Mother of Our Lady is handed down to us from the oldest and most reliable tradition, preserved largely in ancient Apocryphal works and

the writings of the early fathers of the Church, such as Saint John Damascene, Saint Ambrose of Milan, and Saint Justin Martyr. The most complete account of her is given in the Protoevangelium of Saint James, this ancient book, which commanded the greatest reverence and authority in the East, from the earliest times, and was read out on the feasts of the Blessed Virgin.

The following is the narrative contained therein:

"In Nazareth there lived a rich and pious couple, Joachim and Anne. They were childless. When, on a feast day, Joachim presented himself to offer sacrifice in the temple, he was repulsed by a certain Ruben, under the pretext that men without offspring were unworthy to be admitted. Whereupon Joachim, bowed down with grief, did not return home, but went into the mountains to make his pleading with God, in solitude. Also, Anne, having learned the reason of the prolonged absence of her husband, cried to the Lord to take away from her the curse of sterility, promising to dedicate her child to the service of God. Their prayers were heard - an angel came to Anne and said: 'Anne, the Lord has looked upon thy tears, thou shalt conceive and give birth and the fruit of thy womb shall be blessed by the whole world.' The angel made the same promise to Joachim, who returned home to his wife. Anne gave birth to a daughter, whom she called Miriam (Mary)."

From this and other slight accounts we must build up the story of Saint Anne's life. We can fill in the gaps, where the traditional narrative skitch leaves off, and deduce inevitable results, by the nature of her unique and exalted position as the Mother of the Mother of God and grandparent of Jesus, according to the flesh.

God, Who gave His Beloved Son into the care of Mary, gave Mary into the care of Saint Anne. What a glory, what a privilege for Saint Anne! Every mother is blessed when she brings forth a daughter, but Mary was not like other children, stained with original sin, she was the pure and spotless lily, beautiful and glorious, untainted, even in her mother's womb, by the faintest stain, as was fitting for her, from whom would be born the Lamb of God, the God-man - Lord of the world.

Saint Anne was decreed by God to bring forth that spotless virgin, to watch over her, to guide her infant steps, to teach and educate her, to imbue her with every virtue by word and example and prepare her for the exalted part that God had chosen for her alone out of the vast universe, to be His Mother.

Mary's virtue was not alone a miraculous privilege, it was also a deliberate act of voluntary sanctification, whereby, from her earliest youth, she consecrated herself by vow, to virginity and chastity.

Surely, in all this, Anne had her share. Anne gave to the world the Mother of Mercy, to plead for ever for poor mankind at the throne of Him, Who is the Way and the Life. Saint Ambrose, talking of Our Lady, says: "What more noble than the Mother of God! She was a virgin in body and mind, whose candour was incapable of deceit or disguise, humble in heart, grave in words, wise in her resolutions. She wrote seldom and little, read assiduously. Being always employed with fervour, she would have no witness of her heart but God alone. She injured no one, was beneficent to all, honoured her superiors, envied not equals, shunned vain glory, followed reason and ardently loved virtue. Her looks were sweet, her discourse mild, her behaviour modest. Her actions had nothing unbecoming, her gait nothing of levity.

Her exterior was so well regulated that in her body was seen a picture of her mind and an accomplished model of all virtues. Her charities knew no bounds, temperate in her diet, she prolonged her fasts several days and the most ordinary meats were her choice, not to least the taste, but to support nature. It was not her custom to go out of doors, except to the house of prayer and this, always in the company of her relations.

And Anne was the Mother of this child of perfection. Surely, then, she must, herself, have been imbued with those virtues in a marked degree. The Wisdom of God chose her as Our Lady's Mother. We, then, must hold such a mother in the highest honour and veneration. No history of detailed accounts of Anne's life can give us more idea of her holiness and sanctity, than this mere fact of the motherhood and parenthood of such a daughter. If she was so holy, before Mary's conception, as to be thought worthy to be chosen by God to bring forth that child, how much more must God have strengthened and enriched her in virtue, to carry out the lofty duties of that parenthood? How Anne must have been sanctified by daily intercourse with the "Queen of Angels" and how enriched with wisdom, in the intimate union with her who is the "Seat of Wisdom" and "Queen of all Saints."

* * *

At Sephoris, a town in Galilee, three miles north of Bethlehem, there dwelt a pious and respected couple - Joachim and Anne. Tradition asserts that they were born and lived there for some years. Under the reign of the Emperor Constantine a church was erected in that place, to commemorate their birthplace, and the Crusaders also built a church there, not far from Mount Carmel.

After some years they moved to Nazareth, a city in the same province, some time prior to the birth of Our Lord and, in Nazareth, they spent most of their lives - Nazareth, that hallowed spot that witnessed the conception and birth of Mary and the Incarnation of the Redeemer and His Life there, during thirty years. Nazareth, a little village, beautifully and picturesquely pendant on a rocky slope, surrounded on all sides by hills, hidden away in seclusion and obscurity, as were the lives of Our Lord and Our Lady, who dwelt there, but whose memory lifted it, for ever, unto undying fame and imperishable Christian veneration.

It was surrounded by fair and smiling fertility, ripe corn-fields, vineyards, fruit and palm trees. There lived the holy couple - Joachim and Anne, there, according to valuable tradition, was Mary born and there was Jesus conceived and man's redemption begun. Oh, sacred, holy village! Oh, sweet and hallowed spot!

Anne and Joachim do not appear to have been poor, for Joachim was said to have been of some substance. He was of the royal house of David, and she a descendant of the priestly tribe of Aaron. They were, however, of lowly rank of the people, and dwelt in a little hillside house hollowed from the rock, with an inside chamber, and here we can see Blessed Anne presiding over her little household, busily and thriftily engaged with her daily cares and duties, meriting the commendation of the inspired writers: "She has sought wool and flax and hath wrought by the counsel of her hands. She hath put out her hands to strong things and her fingers have taken hold of the spindle. She hath looked well to the paths of her house and hath not eaten her bread idle."

It was a humble home, a poor man's house, but it held within its walls a rich abundance of trust and love and fidelity and a happiness that no earthly wealth can

purchase. Anne worked and busied herself with faithful industry at her daily tasks. She spun and made the household clothes and linen and took her share in the world of the field, in sowing and reaping. In the time of harvest, she did not disdain to use the sickle and to bind and reap, as did all the women and children, at that time. We can see her, at her daily tasks, drawing the water from the fountain, where the olive and palms trees grew. Thither daily towards evening, came the maids and matrons to fill their tall pitchers and discuss the news of the day, for it was the great rendezvous of the village. We can see Saint Anne conspicuous among those other Hebrew women, famous for their beauty of face and figure, for she must have already borne in her appearance the future dignity and distinction of the mother of the most beautiful of women, the mother of the God-man. Then, in the evening, she helped her husband to grind the corn in their primitive little hand-mill and made the flour into cakes and later busied herself with her spindle, while she lovingly talked with her husband, as he dried his fruits or repaired his tools.

On free days we can picture them visiting their friends and relations in the village and the neighbouring towns of Cana and Naim, those towns which were to be consecrated later by those wonderful miracles of Mary's Son, as He turned water into wine at her request; and Naim, where He met the funeral procession of the widow's only son and have him back to his mother, immortalizing the little insignificant village for all time. Or they would climb the neighbouring hill and gaze forth on Carmel by the sea, or northward to Thabor's heights, where Our Saviour would later be transfigured, where His face would shine as the sun and His garments become white as snow.

And this woman of the people, gazing with loving thoughts at this holy mountain, thinking only of its glory in the past,

is to become the mother of the Virgin Queen, from whom will be born the Sun of all glory and Who will be proclaimed, for all time, the Son of the Eternal Father.

On these occasions we can see Saint Anne, a matron of dignified and queenly appearance, dressed in the style of the period, a pad resting on the head, as was then worn, trimmed with gold, or silver coins falling on the forehead. Over this was draped a long and flowing veil, which fell over the back and shoulders, almost to the feet. Beneath was a long gown, girdled at the waist with full and pointed sleeves and embroidered like the veil, in coloured silk. Sometimes a bright coloured jacket was added, stretching to the knees.

* * *

Yet in this happy, pious home of peace and love and mutual trust there was one dark shadow, one heavy cross, borne however with humility and resignation to the will of God - Anne and Joachim were childless, though well advanced in years. Tradition tells us that after twenty years of married life God had not blessed their union with offspring. Now this is at all times a severe and terrible trial, for all good spouses yearn for the fruits of Christian marriage, to bear children to be incorporated into the mystical body of Christ and, in a human way, to be the joy and comfort of their years. Sterility carries also, at all times, a certain reproach, but at the time of Anne and Joachim this was much more real and serious. Sterility had always been looked upon by the women of the Old Law, as a kind of curse, a punishment from heaven, a judgment of God on account of sin. Motherhood they regarded as a blessing and a promise, which God had long before given to Abraham, that He would send the Messiah, Who would be born of his seed to redeem the world. The prophecy further foretold that the Messiah would spring from the house of David and the root of Jesse. Anne and Joachim

were of the Royal house of David and thus their heart-burnings were all the more painful and acute. Twenty years of childless marriage, to be longing for children, from whom the Messiah might be born and to have none; to be looked on with reproach and contempt by the Jewish men and matrons, more fortunate than herself; this was indeed a bitter trial, a heavy cross, but borne by both of them with perfect, trusting resignation and humility. Joachim, according to the law of the time, was legally entitled to put away his spouse, for this grave reason, but loving Anne dearly and sympathizing with her in her trial he imputed no reproach or blame to her, but prayed with her to God to remove the curse of sterility from them and send them a child to bless their union, even though, at this late hour of their marriage, it amounted almost to a miracle. God heard their prayers and gave them a daughter, Mary, a precious deposit from God's hands, which Anne must tend and care to be the mother of His Divine Son, the Saviour of the world. Anne must be the parent, the daily and hourly instructress and guide and confidant of that precious soul, conceived without stain, confirmed in grace, and filled with the Holy Ghost, from her conception. What then does this, reasonably, suppose in Anne? Is it not reasonable, even inevitable to presume that God endowed such a mother with signal virtues and graces to fit her for such a position. She was preparing a temple not for man, but for God. Anne gave her substance, her flesh and blood to construct that temple in which would later dwell the Eternal Wisdom, the Lamb without spot. She must then ornament this sanctuary with every care of watchful, holy education. We may be certain Mary obeyed and loved her mother, Anne, as Jesus, her own Son, obeyed and loved and was subject to her, in His own home, in Nazareth. So we must agree, indeed, that, after the mother of God herself, there is no more privileged person, no more exalted creature than Mary's mother, Saint Anne.

When her daughter was born, Anne gave her the name Miriam, or Mary, which means sovereign mistress and star of the sea. Anne's own name means grace, precious - full of grace, indeed, and precious vessel for the holding of the life, and the enfolding of that priceless treasure, who was to be the instrument of the Incarnation and Redemption. Let us then say, with Saint John Damascene: "Blessed art thou, and thrice blessed, who hath begotten Mary, from whom Christ was born. We rejoice with thee, O most blessed lady, for thou hast become the mother of the child of promise, the fulfillment of our hope. Thou art truly blessed and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. Fitting is it, indeed, to praise her to whom it was given to bring forth that benign Virgin, from whom Sweet Jesus came."

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In due course, after eight days, Anne presented her child to the temple, offering her gift of two turtle doves, as the law prescribed. She laid the holy babe at the feet of the Most High and solemnly promised to bring her daughter again to the temple and consecrate her to the service of God. Joachim ratified her holy vow, and returning home they took up the duties of their sacred trust and surrounded their beloved child with wise and loving care, during every moment of her childhood and girlhood. We can easily imagine what wisdom and sanctity shone forth in Mary even from her earlier years, in her who was born without stain. The early Fathers of the Church have written much on this subject. Anne then, who was her constant companion, had to minister to that precocious wisdom and piety and foster and nourish it by precept and example. What a mother she must have been! How specially endowed by God to qualify her to be the instructor and mentor of such a child, and to meet the mental requirements in one in whom reason must have shone forth, so eminently, at such an early age!

We can, then, picture that happy home at Nazareth - Joachim, Anne and Mary - second only to that of the Holy Family itself. The loving parents, whose faith and trust carried them through their tragedy of childlessness and gave them Mary, the fruit of their loving tears and prayers. How they must have loved her, how tenderly watched over her and guarded her baby footsteps, through the days of babyhood and childhood, until girlhood was reached. And Mary, what a child! Can we not picture her, the smiling baby, the loving child. What an example for all children, for all daughters? We can well imagine how she loved her parents, how she sought to please them and obey their every wish, and, as she grew to girlhood, how she strove to help them, to show them every thoughtfulness and consideration, to be a comfort to them always. Thus the holy, happy days slip by and the time for the fulfillment of Anne's vows draws near. Then one day they prepare to depart for Jerusalem, for the temple, where Mary is to take up residence among the young virgins, to be brought up in the shadow of the altar. The temple of Sion, at Jerusalem, was the second temple, not the original gorgeous edifice built by Solomon and destroyed by Nebuchodonosor, five hundred years before, and restored by Lorobabel, a few years later. It was a magnificent edifice of the rarest beauty, built on a platform of six hundred feet square, on Mount Moria's heights. Here then Mary and her parents enter into the Court of the Women and the priest (probably Anne's nephew-in-law, Elizabeth's husband, Zachary, who was one of the priests about that time and whose old age, like Joachim's, was rewarded by a child of promise, the prophet and precursor of Our Lord) came down, and received the sacred deposit of their daughter, from the holy couple. We can see with what tearful tenderness they embrace their child and take leave of her, resigning her willingly, into the hands of the Most High, to serve Him at His very altar. They make the sacrifice joyfully, gladly, but being human, too, they must feel the

separation, the bitter loneliness, as they turn their backs of Jerusalem and wend their weary way back to Nazareth, to that little house, desolate and lonely once more, deprived of the sunshine of Mary's presence. But their thoughts and hearts are united with their child, and how longingly Anne's time will be occupied in making Mary's clothes and preparing gifts to present to her on each visit that they will make to her. This, they frequently do, and many a long and tiring journey is undertaken to visit their beloved daughter. We can see Anne and Joachim on these occasions - the Blessed Virgin comes down to the Court of the Women, where her parents have come to pray and visit her. What a joyful meeting! What a glad re-union! How their prayers ascend, like incense from these three holy hearts to the Throne of God! And then the parting once more, with hope and courage renewed by the sight of their beloved child.

* * *

Anne and Joachim are now growing old in years and less active. They find the frequent journey from Nazareth beyond their strength, and, according to tradition, they moved to Jerusalem to be near their child, and took up residence in a little house quite near the Pool of Bethesda, where the Church of Saint Anne was later erected to mark the spot. Anne could now visit the temple, close by, more frequently, and see her child; and Mary, very probably, was often allowed to visit her parents. We can picture those visit of the Blessed Virgin to her home, how she would relate to her mother all the details of her life at the Temple, with all its various duties, secular and religious. And Anne, on her part, would have much to tell her daughter, much loving help and advice to give her in all her difficulties. What happiness these visit must have been to both, and how they must have looked forward to them.

This the years slipped by. Tradition tells us that when Our Lady was about twelve years old her father, Joachim, was stricken with his last illness. What grief for Saint Anne to see that beloved spouse about to depart from her side, he who had been the prop and support of her life, who had treated her ever with such loving care and sympathy, and consideration. With what loving care she nursed and tended him in his last illness. As death draws near Our Lady is summoned from the Temple, close by, and hastens to his bedside to take leave of her dear father and receive his last blessing. We can picture the scene - Joachim resigned and trustful, heart and eyes uplifted to heaven, in joyful union with the divine Will, saddened only at the thought of leaving his dear spouse and loving child, deprived of his faithful support and guardianship; Mary and Anne stand on either side of his death-bed, joining their prayers with his to the end. How it reminds us of that other perfect death-bed, of Saint Joseph, in the arms of Jesus, with Mary at his side.

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Thus Joachim passes away and leaves a lonely and saddened widow and an orphaned daughter to mourn him deeply and sincerely. But Anne's time of mourning is hardly ended, when she too falls seriously ill. Knowing she has not long to live, she sends for Zachary, the husband of her niece Elizabeth, and hands her child over to his guardianship, knowing she will be perfectly safe in his priestly care.

Mary comes frequently to visit her mother in her last illness. We can imagine those visits. What consolation to the dying mother to have her last hours gladdened and sweetened by the presence of her dear child. How Mary consoled and cheered and soothed her mother with loving converse and inspired her with courage, hope and consolation.

Then, one evening, she comes for the last time, Anne is dying, the end is near. Mary and her relatives kneel round the bed and join in prayers for the departing soul and Anne, with a last effort of her fast-failing strength, raises herself up to impart her last fond blessing to her beloved child and then, in a last fond embrace, she passes away and Mary lays her gently down.

What grief for that loving daughter, now left orphaned, at such a tender age; what tears of sorrow did she shed, as she already entered on her Via Dolorosa.

All good children love their parents and grieve at their death, and the holier they are the greater their love. The love of the heart is not stifled by being dedicated to God; on the contrary, it is thereby purified and strengthened and thus rendered more delicate and more energetic. "When the heart is pure," said the Curé of Ars, "it cannot help loving, because it has rediscovered the source of love, which is God."

Mary, then, that perfect soul, loved her mother with a two-fold love, a perfect love, and her grief at parting was intense, but she was comforted with the thought that she had ever been a loving daughter, her mother's unfailing joy and comfort. May all our partings be sanctified by Mary's, and attended by the same consolation.

Mary followed her holy mother to her grave, accompanied by her relatives, who did their best to cheer and console her. Some say Anne with buried quite close to the Temple, on the northern side, and there is, today, a crypt to mark the spot. Others, however, maintain that Joachim and Anne were laid to rest in the Valley of Cedron, outside the city gates. Here in this valley there is the chapel of Virgin's tomb and within the precincts of this chapel there is a smaller chapel,

wherein is the tomb which contain the bodies of Our Lady's parents. It may be that the Crusaders, in their time, transferred the bodies of Joachim and Anne from the crypt, near the Temple, to the spot close to the tomb of Mary and Joseph.

The procession wended its way to the place of burial, amidst the canticles of the priest and mourners. The sepulchre is opened and Anne's body placed within. Mary takes a last fond adieu, the tomb is closed, and all withdraw. Joachim, of the Royal House of David, and Anne, of the priestly line of Aaron, parents of the Virgin Queen of Heaven, are laid to rest in death's long peaceful sleep. Mary and her beloved parents are separated, but for a time only; they will meet again before God's holy throne, when their daughter Mary will be crowned Queen of Heaven, and Jesus, the Redeemer of mankind, sitting on the right hand of the Father, will proclaim Anne his holy grandparent, according to the flesh.

Good Saint Anne, by Father Lawrence George Lovasik

The Life of Saint Anne

Concerning the mother of the Blessed Virgin, and the grandmother of Jesus Christ according to the flesh, the Holy Spirit observes silence in the Holy Scripture. Whatever is related of the life of Saint Anne and whatever is said of the power of her intercession are based upon pious traditions.

All our information concerning Saints Joachim and Anne, the parents of Mary, is derived from the "Proto-evangelium" of James, which goes back to about A.D. 150. We can hardly accept as beyond doubt its various statements on its sole authority. In the Orient it had great authority. From the 13th century on, through the influence of a book called "*Golden Legend*," the story of Saint Anne spread over the West until she became one of the most popular saints also in the Latin Church.

In Nazareth there lived a rich and pious couple, Joachim and Anna. They were childless, a condition that was held as a bitter misfortune among the Jews. When on a feast day Joachim presented himself to offer sacrifice in the temple, he was repulsed by a certain Ruben, under the pretext that men without offspring were unworthy to be admitted. Whereupon Joachim, bowed down with grief, did not return home, but went into the mountains to plead with God in solitude. Also Anna, having learned the reason of the prolonged absence of her husband, cried to the Lord to take away from her the curse of sterility, and promised to dedicate her child to the service of God.

Their prayers were heard. An angel came to Anna and said: "Anna, the Lord has looked upon thy tears. Thou shalt conceive and give birth, and the fruit of thy womb shall be blessed by all the world." The angel made the same promise to Joachim, who returned to his wife.

Anna gave birth to a daughter whom she called Miriam (Mary). Anna offered her child to God in the service of the temple at a very tender age.

Why we honor and love Saint Anne

Consider the dignity, sanctity and power of Saint Anne.

1) The DIGNITY of Saint Anne is great because she descended from kings and high priests. On the father's side, she came from the tribe of Levi; on the mother's side, from the tribe of Juda. Her conduct was worthy of her great forefathers.

Her dignity is great especially because of her descendants. Her daughter was Mary, predestined from all eternity to be the Mother of God, sanctified in her conception, the undefiled Virgin, the Mediatrix of all graces. Her Grandson was the Son of God made Man, the Messiah, the Expected of nations. Children are the joy and crown of their parents. Mary is not only the joy and crown, but the foundation for all the glory and power of her mother.

2) Saint Anne's SANCTITY is so great because of the many graces which God has bestowed upon her. Her very name signifies "grace." God prepared Saint Anne with magnificent gifts and graces.

God gave Saint Anne a high degree of sanctifying grace. She was cleansed from the guilt and stain of original sin, and sanctified. She preserved this grace carefully. She would

never have been honored with becoming the grandmother of Jesus by nature unless she had first been His daughter by grace. With all the just of the Old Testament she longed ardently for the salvation of Israel.

God blessed Saint Anne with many actual graces for she performed innumerable good works, such as prayer and deeds of charity. Being the mother of the child “full of grace,” she experienced many and holy inspirations.

God also granted Saint Anne extraordinary graces, for God elevated her to a high degree of dignity, and chose her for His special service. She became a mother in her advanced age by a miracle. In her womb the mystery of the Immaculate Conception was accomplished by the power of the Holy Spirit. How holy must have been her joy and how profound her humility!

But Saint Anne's sanctity was great also because she cooperated with the grace of God.

3) The POWER of Saint Anne's intercession is very great. She is not only a saint and a friend of God, but she is also the grandmother of Jesus according to the flesh.

Saint Anne was zealous in performing good works and striving for virtue. She loved God sincerely, and was resigned to His holy Will in all sufferings, such as her sterility during: twenty years.

You have every reason to choose Saint Anne as your intercessor before God. You should, therefore, go to her with great confidence in your needs.

Goffine's Devout Instructions - Feast of Saint Ann, Mother of the Blessed Virgin

July 26

All that we know of Saint Ann is that she was married to Saint Joachim of the tribe of David, and lived with him in all virtue and piety, but for a long time was childless. This she bore with all patience, till at last the Lord heard her supplications, and made her the mother of the most blessed Virgin. This distinction on the part of God is praise enough for her. On this account the faithful have always shown great veneration for her, and continually invoke her intercession.

At the Introit of the Mass the Church sings:

"Let us all rejoice in the Lord, keeping festival in honor of Saint Ann, on whose solemnity the angels rejoice, and with one voice praise the Son of God. My heart hath uttered a good word; I speak my works to the King."

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Prayer

O God, Who wast pleased to confer upon Saint Ann the grace whereby she became the mother of her who brought forth Thine only-begotten Son, mercifully grant that we, who keep her festival, may, through her intercession, find help with Thee. Through the same Our Lord Jesus Christ, etc. Amen.

Epistle: Proverbs 31:10-31

Who shall find a valiant woman? the price of her is as of things brought from afar off and from the uttermost coasts. The heart of her husband trusteth in her, and he shall have no need of spoils. She will render him good; and not evil, all the days of her life. She hath sought wool and flax, and hath wrought by the counsel of her hands. She is like the merchant's ship, she bringeth her bread from afar. And she hath risen in the night, and given a prey to her household, and victuals to her maidens. She hath considered a field, and bought it with the fruit of her hands she hath planted a vineyard. She hath girded her loins with strength, and hath strengthened her arm. She hath tasted, and seen that her traffic is good; her lamp shall not be put out in the night. She hath put out her hand to strong things, and her fingers have taken hold of the spindle. She hath opened her hand to the needy, and stretched out her hand to the poor. She shall not fear for her house in the cold of snow; for all her domestics are clothed with double garments. She hath made for herself clothing of tapestry, fine linen, and purple is her covering. Her husband is honorable in the gates, when he sitteth among the senators of the land. She made fine linen, and sold it, and delivered a girdle to the Chananite. Strength and beauty are her clothing, and she shall laugh in the latter day. She hath opened her mouth to wisdom, and the law of clemency is on her tongue. She hath looked well to the paths of her house, and hath not eaten her bread idle, Her children rose up, and called her blessed; her husband, and he praised her. Many daughters have gathered together riches; thou hast surpassed them all Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain; the woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands: and let her works praise her in the gates.

Gospel: Matthew 13:44-52

At that time Jesus said to His disciples this parable:

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in a field. Which a man having found, hideth and for joy thereof goeth, and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. Again the kingdom of heaven is like to a merchant seeking good pearls. Who when he had found one pearl of great price, went his way, and sold all that he had, and bought it. Again the kingdom of heaven is like to a net cast into the sea, and gathering together of all kind of fishes. Which, when it was filled, they drew out, and sitting by the shore, they chose out the good into vessels, but the bad they cast forth. So shall it be at the end of the world. The angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Have ye understood all these things?

They say to Him: Yes.

He said unto them: Therefore every scribe instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like to a man that is a householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure new things and old.

Explanation

The hidden treasure is faith in the Crucified, Who remains concealed from the wise of this world by reason of their pride; the hiding of the treasure denotes that faith is to be preserved only by humility; the selling of all that he hath teaches that, for the sake of the faith, we must sacrifice all things, do all things, suffer all things. The parable of the merchant furnishes the same lesson. By the parable of the net the Lord teaches that the universal visible Church of Christ, the kingdom of God upon earth, contains not only the elect, but those also who shall be condemned - the bad as

well as the good. At the end of the world there will be a separation, and the bad shall be cast into everlasting fire.

Aspiration to Saint Ann

Hail, O blessed mother Ann! Blessed art thou, who, for our consolation, didst bear the Mother of our Redeemer. With the greatest, veneration, therefore, and full of confidence, we approach thee, beseeching thee that thou wouldst supplicate our divine Saviour to bestow upon us the graces which we need to follow thy ardent devotion, thy fear of God, and to render us worthy one day to behold in heaven the blessed fruit of thy virgin daughter's womb, Jesus, and to rejoice forever in the contemplation of Him.

Good Saint Anne, Her Power and Dignity

With joy Saint Joachim and Saint Anne
guarded the precious treasure
entrusted to their care.

With love and obedience
the future Mother of God allowed herself
to be guided by her holy parents.

Dignity and Sanctity of Saint Anne

How holy must have been the woman in whom the great mystery of the Immaculate Conception was accomplished! How holy the womb into which the fullness of grace descended, in which the child "full of grace" was conceived and took flesh! Great was the dignity of Saint Elizabeth, the mother of Saint John the Baptist, who was privileged to have her son sanctified in her womb; but how much greater is the dignity of Saint Anne, whose child by a special prerogative from the first instant of her conception was preserved from all taint of sin! Holy was the root from which sprouted the tree which bore the holiest Fruit, Jesus. Saint Anne's sanctity was increased still more through this wonderful conception; and indeed, how highly must she have been sanctified who bore the Mother of God!

Is it any wonder that Saint Jerome praises her in the words: "Anne is the glorious tree from which bloomed a twig under Divine influence. She is the sublime heaven from whose heights the Star of the Sea neared its rising. She is the blessed barren woman, happy mother among mothers, from

whose pure womb came forth the shining temple of God, the sanctuary of the Holy Ghost, the Mother of God!"

Yes, great indeed was the privilege and dignity conferred by God on Saint Anne in electing her to be the mother of the treasury of all graces! How great must have been Saint Anne's joy, how blissful her delight, when contrary to all hope, she gave birth to a child! And what a child! Never before had earth beheld a child so fair and noble as Anne's infant daughter, "conceived without stain of original sin." Never had there been a maternity so rich in blessings as hers, who was privileged to call her child by the exalted title of "Mother of God."

Well, indeed, might Saint John Damascene, a great Doctor of the Church, exclaim: "Blessed, thrice blessed art thou, O Saint Anne, who didst receive from God and bring forth the blessed child from whom proceeded Christ, the Flower of life! We congratulate thee, O blessed Anne, on the dignity of being the mother of Mary, for thou hast brought forth our common hope, the germ of Promise! All pious lips bless thee in thy daughter, all languages glorify thy child! Worthy art thou above all praise, worthy of the praise of all who are redeemed, for thou hast given life to her who brought forth our Savior, Jesus Christ."

Even her name "Anne" signifies "gracious, loving," and typifies her sublime destiny. She, too, had been chosen by God from eternity, and to her, as to her daughter, Mary, may be applied the words: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His ways. . . I was set up from eternity" (Proverbs 8:22,23). God prepared Saint Anne with magnificent gifts and graces. Of her may be said what Saint Bernardine of Siena wrote of Saint Joseph: "In the kingdom of grace, the universal rule is: If God elects anyone for a

special privilege and a sublime state. He bestows on that person all the gifts necessary for his state and adornment."

"Anne was the most chaste of virgins," wrote Mary of Agreda in "The City of God." "From her very childhood, she possessed the fullness of every virtue. She was continually engaged in devout meditation. Her unceasing prayer was that the Redeemer might come soon."

As the works of God are perfect, it was natural to expect that He should make Saint Anne a worthy mother of that most pure creature who was superior in sanctity to all creatures and inferior only to God. Had Saint Anne not been adorned with angelic purity, she could not have become the mother of the Virgin of virgins. The great miracle of Mary's Immaculate Conception fittingly took place in Saint Anne's pure womb.

The servant of God, Anna Catherine Emmerich, in her visions beheld Saint Anne in ecstasy, enveloped in heavenly splendor and surrounded by a host of angels at the moment of Mary's Immaculate Conception. She beheld how the heavens opened, and saw the holy angels and the Most Holy Trinity rejoice. Equally great was the jubilation at the Blessed Virgin's birth. These are but a few rays of Saint Anne's dignity and sanctity.

Veneration of Saint Anne

How long has Saint Anne been honored by Catholics? Baronius, a celebrated ecclesiastical writer, says: "Veneration of Saint Anne is as ancient as the Church itself. In the East and in the West, she has been venerated from the beginning." It is related that the Apostles themselves transformed Saint Anne's dwelling at Jerusalem into a church. Why is Saint Anne one of the most popular saints of

Holy Church? Because of the plenitude of her virtues, the height of her exalted dignity and her close relationship with the holiest of all persons, Jesus and Mary.

After Saint Joseph, no saint enjoys such widespread veneration as good Saint Anne. It would be impossible to enumerate the churches and chapels dedicated to her and the many places of pilgrimage where in the course of centuries manifold favors have been granted and astounding miracles wrought. The number of churches having an altar or image in honor of Saint Anne is constantly increasing.

Love and veneration of the faithful for Saint Anne is manifested in a practical way by giving the name Anne to girls in baptism. Certainly after the name of Mary none is more beautiful. Frequently the two names, Mary and Anne, are combined.

Miraculous Discovery of Relics

According to a most ancient and uninterrupted tradition, the body of Saint Anne was carried to Gaul by the same vessel which carried Lazarus and his sisters there. During the first century of the Christian era, these friends of Our Lord were banished from Palestine because of their faith. From their hands Saint Anne's precious remains were taken for safekeeping to the city of Apta Julia, the city of Apt, France of our own time. In those stormy days of persecution it was necessary to hide the relics of the martyrs and saints. Consequently, the body of Saint Anne was buried in an underground church or crypt. The martyrology of Apt, one of the most ancient in existence, mentions this fact.

The first bishop of Apta Julia, Saint Auspicius, who died before 118, took further precautions to guard this holy

deposit from desecration and had the body buried still deeper in the subterranean chapel. All approach to it was carefully concealed till persecutions and invasions should have ceased. For centuries, the country was repeatedly overrun by hordes of barbarians, and it was only natural that during these agitated years, the precise spot where Saint Auspicius had carefully hidden his treasure became lost in obscurity.

After Charlemagne's decisive victory over the Saracens at the close of the eighth century, peace and security returned to Gaul. Then it was that the people began to restore and rebuild the holy places destroyed or desecrated by the invaders. Priests and bishops of Apt Julia began to seek for the exact spot in the deep crypt where Saint Auspicius had hidden and walled up the sarcophagus of Saint Anne.

Charlemagne's first care on his arrival at Apt was to have the cathedral reconsecrated. This took place during the Easter solemnities, in the presence of an enormous crowd of nobles, clergy and people. But there was one cause of sadness, amid all the rejoicing, namely that every effort to find the remains of Saint Anne had proved fruitless. A miracle, however, led to the discovery of her resting place, as is related by Charlemagne in a letter to Pope Adrian I.

Among the young nobles who accompanied their parents on this occasion was John, a lad of fourteen, the son of Baron Casanova, deaf, dumb and blind from birth. People near the boy in the sanctuary remarked that during the services he was carried away by some overpowering emotion. With rapt and upturned face he seemed to be listening to voices from above. Presently he moved toward the high altar, struck with his staff the steps leading up to it, and made signs that they should dig there. His persistence caused considerable disturbance amid the solemn rites; but neither the clergy

nor the royal guards could quiet or restrain the youth. Charlemagne was deeply impressed. After Mass, he commanded that the excavation desired by the boy should be made. The altar steps were removed and a door closed up with huge stones was revealed. This was the door of the ancient crypt in which Saint Auspicius had been accustomed to celebrate the Holy Mysteries and to feed his flock with the Bread of Life. Its size and adornments reminded one of the Roman catacombs. No sooner had this door been opened and the flight of steps leading down from it disclosed, than the blind boy rushed forward, as if his eyes had been suddenly opened, and led the way into this underground church. Charlemagne now held the boy's hand and gave orders to keep back the excited multitude.

John made signs that they should search further, and struck the wall of the crypt, indicating that what they sought lay beyond. On breaking down the wall, another and lower crypt was discovered at the end of a long and narrow corridor. As they came in view of this crypt, a bright light flashed upon the king and his assistants. They beheld, in front of a walled recess, a burning lamp which flooded the place with unearthly splendor. No sooner, however, had the king and his cortege entered this place, than the lamp went out. But, more wonderful still, at that very moment the blind boy could see, speak and hear. "The body of Saint Anne, mother of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God, is in yonder recess," were his first words.

The awe-stricken king and his followers, at first dumb with amazement, gave vent to their emotion in words of praise and thanksgiving. The walled recess was thrown open, a sweet fragrance like that of oriental balm filled the air, and a casket of cypress-wood was discovered, containing the body of Saint Anne, wrapped round and round with folds of

precious cloth. On the casket was the inscription. Here lies the body of Blessed Anne, mother of the Virgin Mary.

Charlemagne, with all those present, venerated the sacred deposit thus brought to light. Afterwards he had an exact narrative of the discovery drawn up by one of his notaries, and a copy sent to the Pope with the royal letter. This letter and the Pope's answer are still extant.

The miraculous discovery at once made the cathedral of Apt the center of attraction for Christian pilgrims from every part of Gaul. In the wars which followed the reign of Charlemagne, down to our own times, the clergy and people of Apt have watched with never failing love over the sacred treasure which is the glory of their city. Travelers visiting the venerable Cathedral of Saint Auspicius will find piles of ex-votos, the indisputable testimonies during eleven centuries of the wonders wrought there by Christ at the intercession of His sainted grandmother.

The chief cities of Gaul hastened to solicit from the church of Apt portions of the hallowed deposit thus miraculously discovered. Fragments detached from the head found their way to various places through the favor of sovereigns or powerful prelates, but the greatest portion of Saint Anne's sacred body still reposes in Apt.

Vienna, Austria, possesses the right hand of Saint Anne, which is devoutly venerated in the beautiful church which bears her name.

An arm of the saint was solicited and obtained by the Popes, and placed under the care of the Benedictine monks in the magnificent monastery church of Saint Paul-outside-the-Walls, in Rome. In May, 1960, the Benedictines gave the forearm to the Shrine of Saint Anne de Beaupre in Canada.

In the Cathedral of Bologna, Italy, a large portion of the saint's head is venerated.

Through these precious relics, which have proved efficacious in every kind of distress, miracles have been wrought up to the present day.

Veneration of Saint Anne in the Americas

The Spanish missionaries, in particular, who labored in Mexico and South America, sought to inspire their converts with affection for Saint Anne. These zealous heralds of the Faith, while announcing the doctrine of our Divine Savior, also laid the foundation of fervent and tender devotion to Mary, His virgin Mother, and proclaimed everywhere the honor and glory of good Saint Anne.

Saint Anne de Beaupre

In late years, the New World has been venerating Saint Anne in a special manner. Canada claims the title of the land of Saint Anne. The early missionaries who came from Bretagne, France, firmly established devotion to Saint Anne in the hearts of the faithful. The first and principal place of pilgrimage to the honor of Saint Anne in Canada was Beaupre, with its magnificent basilica of Saint Anne.

The history of this shrine is as interesting as it is miraculous. One stormy night in 1650, some sailors were overtaken on the Saint Lawrence by a frightful storm. Their vessel was driven by the wind and waves toward the rocky banks. They were seemingly about to perish, and no earthly aid was near. In their peril, they implored the help of good Saint Anne, the patroness of their beloved Brittany, and vowed, if saved, to build a chapel in her honor on whatever spot they should land.

Morning dawned and to their great astonishment they found themselves on the north bank of the river at Beaupre. They landed and erected a little shrine in honor of good Saint Anne, their deliverer. In 1656, Beaupre was made a parish by Monsignor de Laval, Bishop of Quebec. A parish church was erected the following year.

While the foundation of the building was being laid, the first attested marvel was wrought. Louis Guimond, a prey to keen sufferings, cherished an ardent devotion to Saint Anne. He wished to have a share in erecting a shrine in her honor, and managed to bring three stones for the foundation of the church. After accomplishing this act of devotion, he was suddenly and completely cured.

The wonders began to multiply. They were attested by Bishop de Laval in 1662. Father Morel, who was pastor at that time, wrote: "Of much more importance than all these cures are the spiritual graces daily bestowed by Almighty God through the intercession of good Saint Anne on many a sinner, by converting him to a better life. Having performed the pastoral functions in the church for five or six years, I have known many persons who experienced the grace of so happy a change."

In 1662, while Father Morel was still pastor at Beaupre, the Venerable Mother Mary of the Incarnation, foundress of the Ursuline Nuns of Quebec, wrote from that city to a relative in France:

"Some twenty miles from here. . . is a church of Saint Anne, in which Our Lord works great wonders for the sake of the holy mother of the most Blessed Virgin Mary. At this shrine, paralytics obtain strength to walk, the blind receive their sight, and the sick, no matter what their ailment may be, regain their health."

Nearly three centuries have elapsed since then, but the wonders wrought by good Saint Anne have never ceased. In time a basilica, magnificent in its beauty and proportions, was erected to her honor at Beaupre. Its most remarkable feature was the countless number of crutches, canes, trusses, and even spectacles, which were suspended or piled in the chapels as the ex-votos of innumerable invalids, who thus bore witness to their recovery through the assistance of good Saint Anne.

Destruction and Rebuilding of Basilica

But even such monuments are in the hands of Divine Providence, and as though to indicate that a yet worthier monument should be dedicated to the honor of good Saint Anne, the magnificent basilica was completely destroyed by fire on the morning of 29 March 1922. After the hungry flames had completed their work of destruction, all that remained of the splendid structure was broken and scattered turrets, charred and dismantled walls, heaps of debris, seared and scattered ex-votos. The disaster was complete, but, wonder of wonders, over the shapeless mass of what had been the basilica, above the crumbling portal, between the two broken towers, stood the wooden statue of Saint Anne holding in her arms the Virgin Mary. And, standing unscathed amid the ruins, the miraculous statue of the saint still held in its gilt casing the great relic of Saint Anne.

What was to be done to accommodate the crowds of pilgrims who came to venerate the wondrous statue? The problem was solved by erecting a temporary church. In thirty-seven days, Saint Anne had been provided with a new "basilica," a simple wooden church, in which the miraculous statue was enshrined, and which witnessed the cures of thousands of devout clients. But alas, in the night of 8 November 1926, the wooden framework of this temporary basilica fell prey to

another conflagration. Rising upon the ashes of this modest shrine to the honor of Saint Anne is the present great Basilica, beautiful and majestic in its Romanesque architecture, indeed a worthy monument in stone to the great saint from whose maternal heart streams of mercy have flowed to mankind.

Well over two million pilgrims visit the shrine annually, proving how greatly Saint Anne is venerated among the faithful and what confidence they place in her intercession. Since the beginning of the shrine in 1658, over 46,500,000 pilgrims and visitors from all over the world have come to venerate the relics of good Saint Anne and to implore her intercession. The peak of 2,000,000 visitors was reached in 1957. Many people come in pilgrimages, which are becoming ever more popular. Saint Anne's feast always draws immense crowds to the shrine. As is natural, most of the visitors are from the United States and Canada, though far distant parts of the globe are not without representatives. The year 1958 marked the Third Centenary of the founding of the Shrine of Saint Anne de Beaupre. Nearly three million pilgrims took part in the Tercentennial celebrations, inaugurated on the first Sunday of May and concluded on October 12. Congresses, pilgrimages, novenas, tridiums, and symposiums highlighted each month.

Precious Relics

The Church of Saint Anne de Beaupre in Quebec, Canada has long been privileged to possess a rare relic of the saint. It is a fragment of the wrist bone of Saint Anne, about two or three inches in length, with the skin and flesh still adhering to the bone, and showing the joint near the thumb. When the precious relic arrived in New York from Rome, on May 1, 1892, a holy enthusiasm seized the busy metropolis. Crowds of the faithful began to flock to the church of Saint Jean

Baptiste, where the relic was temporarily deposited for the veneration of the faithful. It was a spectacle never before witnessed in the New World.

After obtaining this relic, the Redemptorist Fathers, Guardians of the Shrine of Saint Anne de Beaupre, sought to obtain possession of the forearm from which the wrist bone had been detached in 1892. This relic had been venerated in the Major Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls, in Rome for centuries. In May 1960, this cherished desire of the Redemptorist Fathers was realized when the Benedictines in charge of the Basilica of Saint Paul donated the entire forearm of Saint Anne to the Basilica of Saint Anne de Beaupre. This relic measures seven inches in length by two inches at the base.

On the occasion of its translation, splendid spiritual celebrations again took place in the church of Saint Jean Baptiste in New York, and at the Shrine of Saint Anne de Beaupre. On July 3, 1960, the first Sunday of the month of Saint Anne, the new Relic was solemnly enthroned in the Basilica of Saint Anne where it has since been venerated by the crowds of pilgrims who come to the shrine.

Saint Anne of New York

So great was the enthusiasm of the faithful of New York in venerating the relic of Saint Anne, in 1892, when on its way to the Shrine of Saint Anne de Beaupre that it remained exposed three weeks instead of three days as first intended. Throngs gathered from every direction. Their pious zeal was rewarded by Pope Leo XIII who soon afterwards presented them with a considerable portion of the forearm of Saint Anne, which since that time has been preserved and devoutly venerated in the church of Saint Jean Baptiste.

In October, 1900, the Fathers of the Blessed Sacrament, whose chief work is the perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, were put in charge of the church. Such numbers of worshipers came to honor the Blessed Sacrament and Saint Anne that the church proved too small, and in 1901, a crypt dedicated to Saint Anne was built under the upper church, but this, too, soon proved inadequate. However, on the appeal of Cardinal Farley, generous donations of the devotees of the Blessed Sacrament and Saint Anne made it possible to erect a magnificent new church, at Lexington Avenue and East 76th Street, which was opened in February, 1913.

Saint Anne, as if to show her gratitude, has not ceased to bestow marvelous cures, spiritual and temporal favors upon her children. In the sanctuary, tier upon tier of crutches, canes and braces, witness her miraculous power. Four times daily the relic is applied to the sick, the lame, the blind, the broken-hearted and the needy. Every Tuesday the perpetual novena services are attended by large crowds.

Every year, solemn novena services are held before the feast of Saint Anne in July, and large as the church is, the novena crowds strain its capacity to the utmost. Nine Masses are celebrated daily, and thousands of Holy Communions are distributed during the novena. Seven priests are on duty in the confessionals from early morning until night. Two sermons and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament are given in the afternoon and evening; the holy relic is applied almost continuously from morning until late at night. Conservative estimates put the number of pilgrims who visit the shrine during the novena at no less than 100,000.

Other Shrines of Saint Anne in the United States

While the other shrines of Saint Anne in the United States are not so widely known as that in New York and that of Saint Anne de Beaupre in Canada, nevertheless the saint does not disdain to work the prodigies of her goodness elsewhere too. In Arvada, Colorado, there is a shrine dedicated to Saint Anne, which is privileged to possess a true relic of the saint, a particle of bone. The relic is venerated publicly every Thursday evening, at which time a perpetual novena is conducted. Many graces and favors are received there yearly through the intercession of good Saint Anne.

In the Middle West, also, are located several shrines of Saint Aime, one in Chicago, Illinois, being known as "Saint Anne of Brighton Park." This shrine was commenced in 1900 by the French Canadians who resided in the vicinity. Its simple origin centered about the authentic relics of the saint, portions of bones, the largest being about one inch in length. Because of the many reported miracles and spiritual favors received, the shrine has grown to be one of the largest and most notable in the United States, and has attracted thousands of pilgrims who are unable to journey to the more famous shrine of Saint Anne de Beaupre. At the Fountain of Saint Anne, the waters of which pass over the encased relic of the saint, many cures have been wrought, and there are on record at the shrine the names of hundreds of persons who have been cured or helped by the holy mother of the Blessed Virgin.

The shrine itself is a chapel in the church of Saint Joseph and Saint Anne at 3836 South California Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

The Basilica of Saint Mary in Minneapolis, Minnesota, is likewise a center of devotion to Saint Anne, and is blessed in the possession of a precious relic of the saint. Here, too, the

devoted clients of Saint Anne come in large numbers to venerate the relic when it is presented for public veneration, and to seek solace in their difficulties through the intercession of the loving mother of the Mother of Mercy. And here, as in every place where she is invoked and honored, Saint Anne proves her power with God by the many favors she bestows.

A fitting monument to the glories of Saint Anne is the shrine in Scranton, Pennsylvania, known as Saint Anne of Scranton. A perpetual novena is conducted there every Monday, and a steady stream of clients continues from early morning till night. For centuries Saint Anne has been invoked as patroness of miners, and it surely cannot be a coincidence that this shrine is located in the center of the anthracite coal mining region.

In the south, New Orleans, Louisiana, boasts of a beautiful shrine of Saint Anne, dedicated in 1935. It consists of a grotto and is one of the several composite units of the National Shrine of Saint Anne which eventually will embrace an entire square. The Saint Anne Group of New Orleans, which has taken over the work of constructing a basilica and other units, was raised to the rank of an Archconfraternity for the whole United States by Pius XI on 18 May 1926.

The Blessed Virgin and Saint Anne

Veneration of Saint Anne is closely allied to veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The feasts of Mary's nativity and presentation are in reality feasts of Saint Anne, as all praises referring to the daughter are directed also to the mother. Mary surpasses all the faithful in veneration, esteem, tender and filial love for her holy mother. While Anne and Mary lived on earth, the bond of love that united their hearts was most ardent and intimate. Nor has this bond been dissolved

in heaven. Rather, it has been drawn still closer and has become indissoluble for all eternity.

Mary once appeared to one of her clients and requested her to add to her customary rosary devotion an Our Father and Hail Mary in honor of Mary's holy mother, Saint Anne. "Those who honor Saint Anne," said Our Blessed Lady, "will obtain great aid in every need, especially at the hour of death." To another person Mary said: "The honor you show to my mother is doubly dear and pleasing to me."

The learned Bollandists relate that a hermit who was especially devoted to the Blessed Virgin was once seized with bitter anguish of spirit. He fled for refuge to the Queen of Heaven. Radiant with splendor, Mary appeared to him and said: "Since you are lovingly devoted to me, I will take away all your grief and sorrow of soul, but I admonish you to venerate and praise my dear mother also, if you desire great graces from me. I am highly pleased with the affection accorded to my beloved mother. Know, too, that my Son, Jesus, has promised to deliver from misfortune all who honor my mother and to assist them in attaining eternal glory. My son, practice this devotion and make it known."

After speaking these words, Mary vanished, leaving a heavenly perfume in the hermit's cell. The anchorite faithfully complied with the request of the Virgin Mother. From that time on to every greeting addressed to the Queen of Heaven, he added the prayer: "And blessed be thy sweet mother, Anne, from whom thou didst assume thy virginal flesh."

If we wish to give Mary special joy, let us fervently venerate Saint Anne, for every child is pleased to see her mother honored.

How the Saints Honored Saint Anne

It would be impossible to enumerate the many saints who practiced great devotion to Saint Anne. Saint Augustine, the illustrious Doctor who illumined the Church of God with his profound wisdom, practiced an ardent devotion to Saint Anne. Every year on the saint's feast he preached on her virtues and dignity with an eloquence which encouraged and inspired his numerous hearers.

Saint John Damascene, another Doctor of the Church, not only venerated Mary most ardently, but Saint Anne as well. He preached many sermons in her honor, and composed books that treated of her glory and dignity. "Saint Anne," he declares in his writing, "is a generous mother, a compassionate mother, a gracious mother, because the word Anne means: 'generous, merciful, gracious.'"

Saint Thomas Aquinas, hailed as one of the greatest of intellectuals, a prodigy of learning, a pillar of Holy Church, an angel of wisdom, and one of the most eminent Doctors of the Church, was a fervent client of good Saint Anne. His example ought to strengthen our confidence in this privileged saint and urge us to venerate her most fervently. He frequently refers to Saint Anne, and sets forth reasons for honoring her dignity and power. He assures us that the privilege of aiding man in every distress has been given to good Saint Anne.

Saint Teresa, the seraphic virgin and reformer of religious discipline, entertained a tender love of Saint Anne. This highly gifted teacher of prayer delighted to speak of Saint Anne's dignity and power, and inspired those under her care with a fervent affection for Our Lady's mother. In all convents of the Carmelite Order, she introduced special

devotions to Saint Anne. The same was done by Saint Bridget in her Order.

Anna Catherine Emmerich, purported to have borne the sacred stigmata in her body, said, "In desperate cases of need I always invoke the holy mother Anne."

Power of Saint Anne's Intercession

Almighty God privileged Saint Anne above all others in choosing her to be the mother of the Queen of Heaven. This favored saint ranks high in merit and glory, near to the Word Incarnate and to His most holy Mother. Certainly, then, Saint Anne has great power with God. Yes, assuredly the mother of the all-powerful and amiable Virgin is likewise full of power and mercy.

To many saints God has granted the power of working miracles. He told His Apostles that they would do greater things than He had done. Now, surely, what He promised to his chosen followers He would not refuse to His own grandmother! Those related to Him by the ties of blood were dear to Him in life and still have great power through their intercession. There can be no question, then, that Saint Anne has great influence over her Divine Grandson and that by her intercessory power she can also work miracles in favor of her clients. Tradition, the history of the Church, and the chronicles of various places of pilgrimage have recorded countless miracles wrought by Christ through the intercession of His sainted grandmother. Nor have they ceased to this day. Yearly hundreds of thousands of persons visit the shrine of Saint Anne de Beaupre in Canada, alone. Many are cured of diseases; all are comforted and consoled. These favors serve to strengthen and confirm our trust and confidence in the power of the intercession of good Saint Anne.

The famous and learned Abbot Trithemius practiced an extraordinary devotion to Saint Anne, and did all in his power to induce others to venerate her. He wrote a book in her praise in which he says: "To Saint Anne, God has given the power to aid in every necessity, because Jesus, her Divine Grandchild according to the flesh, will refuse her no petition, and Mary, her glorious daughter, supports her every request. Those who venerate good Saint Anne shall want for nothing, either in this life or the next. Believe me, if you love and venerate this saint, you will experience how highly God esteems her. He grants all she asks! It would be impossible to enumerate the many graces she obtains daily for her servants."

The same writer continues: "Saint Anne by her intercession dispels melancholy and evil desires. She also aids the poor, cures the sick and comforts the sorrowing. She removes tribulations, and by her intercession obtains for her clients the grace to eradicate vice and implant virtue. She obtains light for the intellect, strength for the will and affection for the heart. This powerful saint has preserved thousands from contagious diseases. Through her intercession, evil spirits have been expelled. For the barren in the married state, she obtains children and heavenly assistance in delivery. She inspires the despairing with trust in God's mercy, and excites the tepid to zeal and fervor. Saint Anne has rescued many from imminent death; yes, through her intercession the dead have, in several instances, been restored to life. Those who worthily venerate Saint Anne can obtain aid in every necessity through her mediation."

Pope Gregory XIII, when introducing the feast of Saint Anne into the Church, declared: "We believe that Saint Anne continually intercedes for us with the merciful Lord, for through her, great benefits have come to mankind. From her

was born the ever pure and immaculate Virgin Mary who was found worthy to bring forth Jesus Christ, our Redeemer."

Pope Gregory XV encourages us thus: "We do not doubt that the more love we show to the mother of Mary, the more we merit the intercession and aid of the holy Virgin who brought forth the only-begotten Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ."

Saint Teresa often said: "We know and are convinced that our good mother Saint Anne helps in all needs, dangers and tribulations, for Our Lord wishes to show us that He will do also in heaven what she asks of Him for us."

The saintly Abbot Trithemius again exhorts us: "Approach Saint Anne, your amiable protectress, with full confidence. Knock at her gates with persevering prayer, because she can obtain for you the forgiveness of your sins, and can open heaven for you. She lacks nothing that can profit you. Believe me, who have already obtained many a favor through her whom the Queen of Heaven honors as her dearest mother. "No one knows, no one believes, how many favors God confers on lovers of Saint Anne!"

Patroness of Christian Mothers

Saint Anne is the great model of all in the married state and of those otherwise charged with the education of children. Great was her honor in being the mother of the Mother of God and in giving to a lost world the Advocate of Mercy. Sublime was her office in instructing this blessed child in virtue and holiness. Saint Anne herself was a "vessel of grace," not in name only but in the possession of those gifts with which God had endowed her to be the worthy mother of the Virgin Mary. Her motherly care was the means of Saint Anne's sanctification. Because of this she receives and will receive a special glory in the Church to the end of ages.

How encouraging to all parents who make the good education of their children their principal duty. By this they glorify their Creator, perpetuate His honor on earth, and sanctify their own souls. From the hands of the parents God will one day require the souls of their children. Happy will those parents be who can say to the Divine Judge: "Not one of those whom Thou hast given me has been lost through my fault."

Realizing, therefore, the great duty she has in rearing her children well, the Catholic mother will daily recommend her children to God and pray especially to Saint Anne for the gift of imparting a good training, the highest and most difficult of all arts.

Saint Anne obtains many graces, priceless graces, for all who venerate her, but she grants her maternal assistance in particular to Christian mothers who choose her for their patroness and model. Numberless examples prove that Saint Anne obtains great favors for Christian mothers. She preserves peace in married life, restores harmony in discord, and often wonderfully changes the bad disposition of a husband or wife. She protects the birth of children in an extraordinary manner; bestows blessings that lighten the task of rearing children properly; brings wayward children back upon the right path; obtains restoration to health for the mother when sick; preserves her precious life for her family, for her helpless children, and prevents the loss of husband and father. She revealed to Saint Bridget that she would protect all who live chastely and peacefully in the married state.

Saint Anne is glorious among the saints not only because she is the mother of Mary, but also because she gave Mary to God. She did not hesitate to sacrifice this child, her greatest joy, to the call of God, dedicating her at a tender

age to His service in the temple. In this she is a beautiful example to parents to foster and encourage vocations to the religious life among their children, rather than to run the dread risk of hindering them. Through the intercession of Saint Anne, parents come to know and acknowledge Divine guidance and learn that children are born to them not for earthly ends but for God.

Titles of Saint Anne

Many titles have been conferred on Saint Anne by her devoted clients. Comfortress of the sorrowing - Mother of the poor - Health of the sick - Patroness of the childless - Help of the pregnant - Model of married women and mothers - Protectress of widows - Patroness of laborers.

Comfortress of the sorrowing. Saint Anne was spared neither trials nor bitterness. God tested her severely, especially by ordaining that she would have to wait so long for Mary, her child of predilection. For years, hidden sorrow was her daily bread.

Mother of the poor. Saint Anne's love for the poor is evident from the praise bestowed upon her by Saint John Damascene, who relates that she and Saint Joachim distributed one-third of their possessions to the poor. Saint Anne still continues her charity in heaven by assisting the poor, often in a wonderful manner. Nor does Saint Anne forget the dying, the poorest of the poor. These, above all others, experience her motherly protection.

Health of the sick. The number of cures wrought through the intercession of Saint Anne is countless. Day after day the churches dedicated to her, as that at Saint Anne de Beaupre, have resounded with the suppliant voices of her

clients. Sight has been restored to the blind, hearing to the deaf, soundness to the bodies of the infirm and crippled.

These are the exterior signs of the power and maternal goodness of Saint Anne, but what shall we say of the interior cures of spiritual ailments known to God alone? How many times has the good saint strengthened a wavering courage, given a new vitality to a languid spiritual life, opened a mind to the light of the true Faith? Numberless prodigies of this kind have taken place at the Shrine of Saint Anne, unknown to men for the most part, but known to God, whose loving Providence seems to take delight in granting multiplied graces through the intercession of good Saint Anne, so that the ex-votos, the mute testimonies of innumerable physical cures, could well be supplemented by testimonials of spiritual favors, were such a thing possible.

Good Saint Anne, like a true and faithful mother, does not turn a deaf ear to the pleas of her children, and as a mother's heart is deeply touched at sight of the afflictions of her children, so is Saint Anne's motherly heart touched by the petitions of those who come to her seeking solace and comfort.

Patroness of the childless. Childless mothers invoke good Saint Anne, because only after many years of married life did this saint finally receive from God the child of grace, Mary. Full of compassion for those in like sorrow, she intercedes with God, and if it be His holy will, obtains for them the favor which completes the happiness of conjugal union.

Help of the pregnant. This office of good Saint Anne is connected with the foregoing. As she obtains for women the much-desired favor of motherhood, so she will also guard the fruit of the womb, so that the child may come to birth

safely. She assists mothers when in their great anxiety, and obtains a happy delivery.

Model of married women and mothers. Saint Anne is the shining example of all Christian women. This was her vocation on earth, as wife of Saint Joachim and mother of the Blessed Virgin. She is, indeed, the patroness of Christian women and mothers, their special protectress and advocate, having herself borne the heavy burdens of the married state and tasted all the bitterness which makes this vocation difficult. In every family where good Saint Anne is invoked, she shows herself a loving protectress, and never has she been venerated or invoked in vain.

She obtains for women, particularly in our misguided age, the light to understand the high purpose of matrimony. God instituted this sacrament for the propagation of mankind. Since the fall, the state of matrimony can be, especially for the wife, a state of penance, of labor, of self-sacrifice. Although children are often a source of much trouble and care to parents, particularly to the mother, they are, nevertheless, to be regarded as a blessing, for they are a gift of God, a pledge of His fatherly goodness. This is the sublime, the sacred purpose of matrimony: to bring forth children who will be children of God; heirs of heaven, who are destined to possess forever the places of the fallen angels! The hope of the Church is in good Christian mothers; their sons and daughters will fill the sanctuaries and convents.

Protectress of widows. Difficult is the state of the Christian widow. Bereft of her husband, her staff and the support of her children, she stands alone in the world - doubly needy if poor. Is it any wonder, then, that Holy Scripture, after recommending to our charity the poor and orphans, also begs our compassion for widows? Their patron, good Saint

Anne, will lovingly shield and protect them in their many dangers and temptations both spiritual and temporal. Hence, Christian widows feel drawn to place themselves under her powerful protection.

Patroness of laborers. Among the various classes of laborers, many regard Saint Anne as their special protectress. But it is very significant that Christian sculptors venerate her as their model. They have chosen as their emblem the image of Saint Anne teaching the child Mary, with these words inscribed beneath, "Thus she wrought the Tabernacle of God." For every Christian sculptor, the tabernacle, the dwelling of God, is in a certain sense the masterpiece of his art,

Saint Anne Obtains for Her Clients a Happy Death

As the Blessed Virgin revealed, Saint Anne obtains for her clients the grace of a happy death. A priest tells of this experience of Saint Anne's power in obtaining a happy death for those who venerate her.

"While I was assistant pastor in the parish of X, I was aroused one night by the ringing of the door bell. A stately woman, a stranger to me, called up the stairs: 'Father, please go quickly and take the Blessed Sacrament to a servant in a house upon the hill, for she will not live through the night. The sexton is waiting for you in the church.'

"The sexton had been awakened by the same person. I took the Blessed Sacrament and we started for the house to which the woman had directed us. An hour later we arrived at the place designated. To our great surprise, we found the house locked, and nowhere a sound or a light. We knocked at the door, but when it was opened no one knew anything of a servant being ill there, so we concluded that some

person, wishing to make light of us, had deceived us. However, in order that I would not need to return with the Blessed Sacrament, one of the servants declared her readiness to go to confession and to receive Holy Communion. Her suggestion was readily accepted. During her confession she began to feel indisposed. She finished her confession and received Holy Communion. Before long her condition became worse and she was obliged to go to bed. Soon, it was evident that her end was near. I administered extreme unction and imparted the indulgence for the dying. Scarcely had this been done, when the servant died.

"About her bed hung pictures of many saints, among which was a large decorated representation of Saint Anne. 'This servant,' said the inmates of the house, 'practiced special devotion to Saint Anne. In her honor she abstained from milk every Tuesday.' I have no doubt that the woman who called the sexton and myself was none other than Saint Anne, who obtained for her client this last great favor."

Tuesday Dedicated to Saint Anne

Saint Anne obtains numerous favors for those who dedicate Tuesday to her honor. The Blessed Virgin is said to have revealed to different saints that she wished them to practice special devotion in honor of her glorious mother each Tuesday.

An ancient tradition tells us that when Saint Anne was about to die, Our Lord addressed her thus: Blessed art thou, My beloved grandparent! All who venerate thee shall have blessings for soul and body. If they invoke thee in their needs, I will hear them for thy name's sake. Since thou dost die on a Tuesday, I appoint this day for thy honor, and I will grant the prayers of all who honor thee on this day.

Various devotions may be practiced on Tuesdays. It will greatly please Saint Anne if on this day we assist at Holy Mass and receive Holy Communion in her honor and offer it to God in thanksgiving for the prerogatives bestowed upon her. Saint Gertrude beheld in a vision how pleasing it is to the saints if we thank God for the graces He has bestowed upon them. It was revealed to her that those who do this will be adorned with the merits of the saints they thus honor.

There is also another simple way by which we may show our veneration for Saint Anne. We are told that she was very charitable and gave alms freely. It will give her great joy if we give alms in her honor on Tuesdays. One may also pray the Hail Mary nine times in honor of the nine months during which she bore the Immaculate Virgin Mary in her womb. Clients of Saint Anne should devoutly celebrate her feast day, July 26th, and prepare for it by a novena. Lastly, we should endeavor to propagate devotion to good Saint Anne, which can be done effectively by circulating this booklet.

Cured by Saint Anne

In 1917, Miss Kirby of Newark, New Jersey, experienced a severe pain in her hip. The doctor ordered her not to use her foot for six weeks. At Saint Joseph's Hospital in Paterson, New Jersey, three X-rays were taken and a brace made for the foot. Miss Kirby wore the brace, though it occasioned her intense pain and caused sores to form on her foot. She went to several other doctors, and had eight more X-ray pictures taken, but treatments were of no avail. Some doctors declared it to be tuberculosis, others a hip disease.

Concerning her cure in 1920, we quote her own words: "I had heard a great deal of Saint Anne's devotion, and the Sisters of Saint Joseph where I attended school told me of the relic of Saint Anne. This filled me with great faith and

confidence in Saint Anne. My mother was going to take me to another doctor, but I asked her to take me to the church, where I had the relic applied to my foot, and within one hour I had a complete cure. At once I bought a statue of Saint Anne and had a Mass said in her honor. I promised to return to the same church for a few Sundays, to do all in my power to spread devotion to Saint Anne and to spend one hour a week in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament in thanksgiving for the great favor, which I feel Saint Anne granted me. Thanks to God and dear Saint Anne!"

Another Prodigy

The following account is taken from the "Annals of Good Saint Anne de Beaupre," of August, 1937:

"Saint Paul, Minnesota, 12 May 1937. About four years ago my son, then twenty-two years old, was flying in an airplane with a friend, when their plane crashed and landed in water. Coming down, the plane hit some electric power lines, but, through a miracle of God, my son was saved from being burned to death. The accident, however, left him in such a state that no one thought he would reach the hospital alive. I happened to be some fifty miles from the town. When they notified me of the accident, the first thing I thought of was prayer, and I pleaded that my son would live until I reached the hospital. When I arrived, the nurse took me into the room, and I did not know my own son, for there was not a bone in his face that was not smashed and his head was about three times its normal size. The doctors were doing all they could, but they saw very little hope of recovery.

"I at once implored the help of good Saint Anne, who had never failed me, and I begged her to ask the Lord to save my son, to preserve him from being blind or crippled. I promised to send her the only thing of value I had, a gold watch, that

it might be used for the altar or some such purpose. I stayed beside my son all day and all night, as they thought the end would come at any time. Towards morning he spoke, telling me not to worry, as he felt he was going to be all right. In one week's time, my boy walked out of the hospital with me. When people saw him, they could not believe their eyes.

"After taking treatments for a year (for the accident left a hole in the roof of his mouth, which made it difficult for him to eat or drink), he was feeling much better. Now the doctors have put a silver plate in his mouth and he is back at work again. I wish to thank good Saint Anne not only for this, but for the many other favors she has granted me." Mrs. J.L.

"In order to cure an insidious lung infection, two serious operations had to be performed on me. I prayed to Saint Anne and the Blessed Mother to carry me through this ordeal safely. Thanks to them, I am well on the road to recovery." H.K., New York

"It is with a grateful heart that I thank good Saint Anne who through her powerful intercession with her divine Grandson and her beloved Daughter has obtained my brother's return to the Sacraments after years of neglect. After twenty years, he was reconciled to God on his death-bed and died a truly repentant death. His mind was crystal clear at the time of his reconciliation, his thoughts were continually on heaven and he repeatedly asked pardon for his sins. This happy death was little short of a miracle as he had been very bitter against the Church. Saint Anne is truly the Saint of Miracles. For years I prayed to her with confidence that my brother might see the error of his ways and she has rewarded my trust." - Ireland, June, 1962

"Saint Anne has helped me through many heartaches and has been with me through the years. Many years ago I made

a novena to Saint Anne for a special favor, promising to name my first child in her honor. My little girl is now three years old and her name is Anne. Saint Anne has also helped me to overcome a nervous breakdown. I only wish more people would pray to this wonderful Saint!" Mrs. E.U., New Jersey.

"For sixteen years my mother suffered from acute rheumatic arthritis which steadily grew worse. For the past six months she was unable to kneel and had the greatest difficulty in walking even a short distance. We had to help her in and out of her chair. We made several novenas to Saint Anne for this intention and applied Saint Anne's oil to the affected parts, while praying for God's will to be done. Last night for the first time in six months she was able to kneel down without any help. I thank Saint Anne from the bottom of my heart for this and countless other favors, particularly that of sending me a wonderful friend who has brought me closer to Jesus and to her." - Miss K.D., 1961

Good Saint Anne, The Mother of Our Lady

Good Saint Anne

Many if not most of the saints have had holy mothers, mothers who understood the tremendous responsibility of Christian motherhood, and who strove to instil into their children's minds the truths of religion from the first moment of the dawn of reason. We read of the mother of Saint Louis, King of France, that she repeated to him constantly, "My son, I would rather see you dead at my feet than guilty of one mortal sin." We read of the mother of the sainted Curé d'Ars that she had consecrated him to God even before his birth, and never allowed him to forget that he belonged in a special manner to the Most High. We read of the mother of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino that she kept repeating the names of Jesus and Mary into his infant ears. We know of Saint Monica's life-long struggle with Satan for the soul of her son, afterwards the great Saint Augustine, of the saintly mother of the "Little Flower," Saint Thérèse, in our own times, and of hosts of others. What a privilege and what a responsibility is a mother's! It would almost seem as though she could make her child a saint if she set her mind to it, if she began with the infant, with the tender sapling, training it to grow in the right way while it is capable of being trained. Surely, no commendation is too high for a good mother.

And if the mothers of saints and all good mothers deserve to be praised and honoured, what praise and honour are great enough for her who was worthy to be mother of the Queen of Saints, good Saint Anne, grandmother according to the flesh of Our Saviour Jesus Christ? Devotion to Saint Anne is the

spontaneous warm and hearty outpouring of the true Catholic heart which loves Mary. One feels how Mary must have loved and revered her mother. The Immaculate Virgin obeyed and practised in their utmost perfection the commandments of the Law. Next to Jesus Christ Himself, none other ever honoured and obeyed parents as she did, and with that honour and obedience went the most intense filial love.

What must have been the holiness of that parent who was made the mother of the only one among the descendants of Adam conceived and born without stain of sin? God fashioned Saint Anne to be the perfect mother of a still more perfect daughter. He trained her in the school of humiliation, of hope deferred, of prayers unanswered, of years of disappointment borne with perfect meekness and resignation, and then, in her old age the miracle was wrought, the prayers of years were answered, and oh! what an answer! The Immaculate Mary was conceived in her womb. She became the mother of her who was to be "the glory of Jerusalem, the honour of our people, the joy of Israel, above all women upon the earth." In a word, Saint Anne was the mother of the Mother of God. She was not alone to bring forth a pure, beautiful and glorious child, but she was further given the charge of preparing and educating her daughter for the sublime dignity which awaited her.

When one meets a virtuous and amiable girl it is natural to say, "That girl has been well brought up. She must have had a good mother." But what a girl was Mary! Of her, Saint Ambrose says "What more noble than the Mother of God. She was a virgin in body and mind, whose candour was incapable of deceit or disguise, humble in heart, grave in words, wise in her resolutions, she spoke seldom and little, read assiduously, and placed her confidence not in inconstant riches but in the prayers of the poor. Being

always employed with fervour, she would have no witness of her heart but God alone. She injured no one, was beneficent to all, honoured her superiors, envied not equals, shunned vain-glory, followed reason, and ardently loved virtue. Her actions had nothing unbecoming, her gait nothing of levity, her voice nothing of overbearing assurance. Her exterior was so well regulated that in her body was seen a picture of her mind. Her charities knew no bounds, temperate in her diet she prolonged her fasts several days, and the most ordinary meats were her choice, not to please the taste but to sustain nature. It was not her custom to go out of doors except to the house of prayer, and this always in the company of relatives."

What a model for young girlhood was Mary, and what a testimony to a good mother's care and example. Of that mother, Saint Jerome says: "Anne is the glorious tree from which bloomed a twig under Divine Influence. She is the consecrated ground which brought forth the Burning Bush. She is the sublime Heaven from whose heights the Star of the Sea neared its rising. She is the blessed barren woman, happy mother among mothers, from her pure womb came forth the shining temple of God, the sanctuary of the Holy Ghost, the Mother of God."

Mary is the Treasurer of all graces. How great then the privilege and dignity conferred by God upon Saint Anne when God chose her for Mary's mother? "Blessed, thrice blessed, are you, Saint Anne!" exclaims Saint John Damascene, the great Doctor of the Church, "who did receive from God and bring forth the blessed Child from whence proceeded Christ, the Flower of Life." Even her beautiful name Anne (grace) signifies gracious, loving, and refers to her sublime destiny. She too had been selected from all eternity like her beloved child. To her may be

applied the words of Saint Bernardine of Siena regarding Saint Joseph:

"In the Kingdom of God the universal rule is 'If God elects anyone for a special privilege and a sublime state, He bestows on that chosen person all the gifts necessary for its adornment'."

"Anne was the most chaste of virgins," wrote (Venerable) Mary of Agreda in the 'City of God.' "From her very childhood she possessed the fullness of every virtue. She was being continually enlightened, and was constantly engaged in devout meditation. Her unceasing prayer was that the Redeemer might come quickly. Had Anne not been adorned with angelic purity she could never have become the mother of the Virgin of Virgins. Without purity the great miracle of Mary's Immaculate Conception could never have taken place in her womb."

Blessed Anne Catherine Emmerich in her visions saw Saint Anne in ecstasy, enveloped in heavenly splendour, and surrounded by hosts of angels at the moment of Mary's Immaculate Conception. She beheld the Heavens open, and the Blessed Trinity and angels rejoicing. Equally great was the Heavenly jubilation at Mary's birth. Saint Anne shares in the glory of Mary in a special manner on the great feasts of the Immaculate Conception and Nativity, they are her feasts also, on which her clients should rejoice with her.

Saint Anne's Life on Earth

All that we know about Saint Anne has been derived from what is called "Apocryphal" literature. There were certain writings of the apostles and other holy people of the early ages of the church, which though not accepted as the inspired Word of God, were yet regarded with respect and

veneration, and as of historical importance. They related many details about Our Lord's family connections, which are not to be found in the Gospels. These writings were called "Apocryphal." One of them is called the "Proto-Gospel of Saint James" and it tells us what we are here to relate regarding the parents of Our Blessed Lady. Saint Joachim was descended from the great king and prophet David, although at the time of Our Lady's birth that family had sunk into poverty and comparative obscurity. His wife Anna belonged to the tribe of Aaron, the High Priest, and brother of Moses the great law-giver. The tribe of Aaron had always been set apart for the priestly office. Thus, both parents of Our Lady were of the very flower of the Jewish race. In purity of life and nobility of character, they far exceeded all who had preceded them. But to outward seeming, Joachim and Anna were like their neighbours. They had to work hard, because the family of David had not prospered in the worldly sense; and though they possessed a little bit of land it needed constant labour to wrest a living from it. The women of the East help their men in the fields, and so did Saint Anne help Saint Joachim. She drew water from the well at eventide when the day's work was over, she helped to grind the corn or grain which she afterwards made into bread, she made butter, and no doubt kept bees and gathered the honey, as all the peasant women did in the little town of Nazareth where she dwelt with her husband. All the garments which she and her husband wore, and all the furnishings of her little home were spun and fashioned by her own industrious hands. The "Lesson" for Saint Anne's Feast is taken from "Proverbs 31." It describes a "valiant woman" and is eminently suitable to the mother of Mary.

"Who shall find a valiant woman? From afar, and the utmost bounds is her price. The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he shall not want for spoil. She will render him good, and not evil all the days of her life. She has put out her

hands to strong things, and her fingers have taken hold of the spindle. She has opened her hand to the needy, and stretched out her hands to the poor - strength and beauty are her clothing, and she shall laugh in the latter day. She has opened her mouth to wisdom, and the law of clemency is on her tongue. She has looked well to the paths of her house, and has not eaten her bread idle. Her children have risen up and called her blessed; and her husband, he praised her. Many daughters have gathered riches, you have surpassed them all. Favour is deceitful and beauty vain. The woman that fears the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates."

Such was Anna or Anne, beloved and cherished spouse of Joachim. Surely, these two were happy! They were certainly very happy in each other, but one thing was wanting to complete their happiness to make their home a paradise. That one thing was a child. This virtuous and noble pair were childless. In most cases the lack of offspring is disappointing to a good, happily-wedded couple, but under the Jewish dispensation it was more than disappointing, it was a tragedy - a disgrace. Sterility was considered by the Jews to be a judgment of God on the woman for some sin. Motherhood was a sign of God's blessing on the righteous, and Jewish women longed for children because each one hoped that the expected and promised Redeemer, the Messiah - would come of her family. For a childless woman there could be no such hope. In such a case, it was even permitted to her husband to put her away. Joachim and Anna had been wedded for over twenty years. All that time they had prayed that God might bestow offspring upon them, but in vain. They beheld themselves growing old. Humanly speaking there was no hope that Anna would become a mother, but Joachim never thought of deserting her. Rather, he loved her the more, and shared in her humiliation. They

were both resigned to God's Will, and prayed together that the Messiah would come quickly. They did not guess that He was to be their own grandson, according to the flesh.

At length the biggest humiliation of his life came to Joachim. He was refused entrance into the temple on a feast-day. The High Priest told him that being childless his sacrifice would not be acceptable to God. But both he and his wife turned to God for comfort, and Anne promised that if the Lord took away her reproach she would dedicate her child to His service. The faith of the pious couple was rewarded by the apparition of an angel who assured them that they would have a child "whom all the world should bless." The promise was fulfilled when Anne became the mother of a daughter, Mary, known to after ages as "Blessed among women."

The devout clients of Saint Anne may learn from this brief recital to have confidence in her who lived such a perfect life, and yet experienced humiliation and disappointment for so many years. She will not be deaf to the prayers of those who are still in this Vale of Tears. And as Mary was the great gift sent to Anne to console her for all she had endured, so will she lead us also to Mary, and obtain for us the aid of her Blessed Child. On the day of her purification, Saint Anne thanked the Lord for all His mercies, and promised to bring her daughter to the temple when she should be of suitable age. This done, the pious little family returned to Nazareth. In representations of Saint Anne, we always see her with her blessed child beside her, while a book lies open upon the mother's knee. It is the book of the Holy Scriptures.

According to the Fathers of the Church, Mary's reason shone forth from her earliest years, and she understood without difficulty all that her mother taught her from the inspired pages, which she soon learned to read herself. With particular reverence and love would the holy Virgin study those passages which spoke of the Redeemer to come, and

in her humility she longed to be even the handmaid of the Virgin who was to bring forth the Messiah.

Did Anne guess from the angel's message to her what was to be the sublime destiny of her daughter? If so, with what reverence and love combined must she not have gazed upon that daughter's lovely face, how carefully did she not train and teach her. Dutifully and lovingly, the little Mary listened to her mother, drinking in every word, and learning to love her mother more and more as she realized that mother's virtues. How Anne must have advanced on the Way of Perfection because of this close contact with Mary, the "Mystical Rose"!

The perfect mother and still more perfect child form a beautiful and inexhaustible subject for contemplation and meditation.

At length the time arrived when Anne must fulfill her vow, and part with the treasure of her home. It was the custom of (some) pious Jewish families to have their daughters brought up within the precincts of the temple of Jerusalem, in order that they might benefit by the instructions of the High Priest, and be taught all that it is useful for young girls to know by pious women older than themselves. Joachim and Anne lived at Nazareth. They set out with their daughter to make the long journey to Jerusalem. Great artists have often taken for their theme the Presentation of the youthful Virgin in the Temple. They have painted her as they saw her in their mind's eye. We see the long flight of steps which the lovely child ascends alone. Her parents stand beneath gazing after her with longing eyes. The High Priest stands above, with hands outstretched, behind him her future companions. But no one can depict the terrible loneliness of the mother and child. Only those who have known such partings can have some faint idea of their feelings. Only the

thought that they were doing God's Will sustained them. It is said that Joachim and Anne in their later days came to live in Jerusalem, in a little house near the Temple so as to be near their daughter Mary. What a consolation it must have been to their declining years to behold her each day increasing in grace and beauty. There is a lovely picture of the youthful Virgin in the Temple, which is venerated under the title of "Mater Admirabilis" (Mother most Admirable). This painting hangs in an oratory in the Sacred Heart Convent of the Trinita dei Monti in Rome. Many wonderful favours have been granted to those who have prayed before it. These, and the interesting history attached to the picture and its title would seem to indicate that Our Lady wishes us to recall those early days in the Temple when she prayed and worked and meditated and prepared herself without knowing it, for the great dignity awaiting her.

Saint Anne often visited Mary in the Temple, and the good pious daughter often went to help and comfort the parents who were growing old and feeble. Joachim died first, in the arms of the faithful wife whom he had so loved and cherished through all the vicissitudes of life, and in the presence of the daughter who was to be the Mother of God. Only the death of Saint Joseph could be more blessed than that of Joachim. As he gazed into the face of his pure and lovely daughter, did God reveal the great secret to his soul? Did he and Anne read the unspoken thought in one another's eyes? We do not know. The old man blessed his wife and daughter, and gave up his soul in peace. Anna did not long survive him. The best traditions tell us that she did not live to behold Our Saviour. It is supposed that she died in Jerusalem some months after the death of Joachim. We can picture to ourselves the beautiful death of Saint Anne. She had been a holy and valiant woman all her days. In the last years of her life, in the intimate companionship of Mary she had arrived at the most sublime heights of prayer and

contemplation. Mary prayed beside her dying bed, soothed her anguish, wiped the sweat of death from her brow. What a union of hearts there was between this mother and child. Who can better help us to draw near to Mary than her mother Saint Anne? The good mother breathed her last sigh, and died, blessing Mary with her last breath, while the tears of the loving daughter rained down upon her face. Surely, Saint Anne must be the Patroness as Saint Joseph is the Patron of a happy death. Those who have to grieve for a loving mother should seek consolation from the Blessed Virgin, reminding her of the sorrow and loneliness she felt at the death of Saint Anne. Mothers who have reason to fear lest they should be called away from their children while these are yet of tender age, should invoke in a special manner the protection of Saint Anne, and implore her, and her Virgin Daughter to protect their little ones.

We may be sure that Saint Anne took care to provide faithful and prudent guardians for her child before leaving this world. The little house at Nazareth where Mary had been born was left to her as a patrimony, and there, a few years later the Angel Gabriel announced to her that she was to be the Mother of God.

Veneration of Saint Anne

The body of Saint Anne was buried outside the gates of Jerusalem. There, in the first days of her bereavement we can imagine Mary going to weep beside the tomb, before she retired to her little home at Nazareth. There, in after years she would have come, accompanied by Joseph, and later by Jesus Himself, when they came to visit the Temple. Later still, widowed and childless, she would linger beside her mother's grave after she had revisited the scenes of her Son's Passion. We may suppose then that the tomb of Saint Anne was an object of great veneration to all the disciples of

Our Lord. They would have been horrified at the idea that those sacred remains should be desecrated by profane hands. Yet they knew, because of Our Lord's prophecy that the destruction of Jerusalem was at hand. Lazarus, Martha and Mary and some others determined to leave the doomed city before the judgment of God fell upon it, but they would not leave the body of Our Lady's mother to be profaned by the brutal soldiery of Titus. They carried it away with them, over the seas. They landed in the south of France, and tradition relates that they buried Saint Anne's body in a cave at a place called Apt in Provence, in the south of France. Later on, a church was built over the spot, but owing to wars and religious persecutions the faithful were so harassed that they could not practise their devotions there, so it fell into decay, and even the place of Saint Anne's sepulture was forgotten. When peace returned to France and Catholics could breathe once more, a magnificent church was erected on the site of the old one, but the cave or crypt where the holy remains lay could not be found. During the consecration of the new church however, in the eighth century, God chose, by a wonderful miracle, to disclose the resting-place of the grandmother of Jesus Christ, according to the flesh.

At the most solemn part of the ceremonies a boy of fourteen, who was among the congregation, was noticed as becoming very excited. He was blind, deaf and dumb, and usually quiet and impassive. What was the surprise of everybody when he suddenly rose from his seat, walked up to the altar steps, and struck his stick several times upon one of them. His friends and others thinking he had suddenly gone mad tried to remove him, but in vain. He became still more violently excited, and kept on striking on the same spot. The Emperor Charlemagne was present in the church, and all eyes were turned upon him seeking advice or orders as to what to do. He, doubtless inspired by God, gave orders that

workmen were to be summoned to remove the steps. This was done, and a subterraneous passage was discovered. The afflicted boy jumped into it, followed by the Emperor, and made signs that they were to break down a wall which impeded their progress. This was done, and at the end of a long narrow corridor, another crypt was discovered, and, in front of a walled recess they saw a lamp burning, which sent forth an unearthly radiance. At that moment, the light went out, while at the same moment the afflicted boy was given to see, to hear and to speak. He called out "It is she." Charlemagne echoed his words, and the cry was taken up by the crowds who sank on their knees, overcome by emotion.

In the casket, when dug out, they found a winding sheet, enclosing the relics, and bearing the inscription: "Here lies the body of Saint Anne, mother of the glorious Virgin Mary." The winding sheet was found to be of Eastern design and texture, such as would be likely to be used in the Holy Land. Charlemagne, after venerating the sacred remains of Saint Anne, thus unexpectedly and miraculously brought to light had an exact narrative of the occurrence drawn up by a Notary, and a copy of the same sent to the Pope with a letter from the Emperor. These documents and the Pope's reply are still extant.

The cathedral built over the crypt holding the remains of Saint Anne is dedicated to Saint Auspice, the bishop who received the saint's body from the disciples, and who interred it in this place, deep in the earth to save it from profane hands. From the time of the above-mentioned discovery, this cathedral at Apt became the goal of devout pilgrims from all parts of France and Europe, who flocked thither to pay their homage to the blessed "grandmother" of Jesus Christ. The clergy and people of Apt, fully alive to the importance of the charge committed to them by God, have carefully guarded Saint Anne's relics all down the centuries,

and, though some of them have been bestowed upon various churches, et cetera, the major portion of those relics still repose at Apt. Pilgrims to Saint Anne's shrine in the venerable cathedral will find piles of ex-votos, (offerings made after a cure and in fulfillment of a vow,) which testify to the gratitude of other pilgrims helped by good Saint Anne during the past eleven hundred years and more. Many devout clients of Our Lady and Saint Anne who visit Lourdes and Saint Anne d'Auray (more of this, soon) will be surprised to learn that, not so very far away from Lourdes rests the body of Our Lady's own beloved mother.

What historical associations cluster around this shrine at Apt! Charlemagne bowed low before it, kings and queens have prayed there since his time. Crusaders have knelt there to invoke Saint Anne's blessing upon their pious undertaking. Men and women prominent in the history of Europe during the Middle Ages left rich offerings at the feet of Our Lady's mother. The great King of France, Louis XIV, was a gift from Saint Anne to his mother, Queen Anne of Austria. Like Saint Anne herself, this queen, wife of Louis XIII, had arrived at an advanced age without bearing a child to be heir to France. She invoked Saint Anne, sending chosen messengers to Apt to pray there. The birth of a son and heir was the extraordinary favour granted to her in return. The queen's intense gratitude added a side-chapel to the Sanctuary, and thither the body of the saint was removed.

Many valuable gifts presented by Anne of Austria and other wealthy clients of the saint vanished during the stormy period of the French Revolution; fortunately the sacred relics remained untouched. Papal Bulls have over and over again asserted the genuineness of Saint Anne's relics at Apt, and so keen became the demand for them that at length they could only be obtained by permission of the king. An arm of

the saint is enshrined in the basilica of Saint Paul's outside the Walls, Rome; her right hand is venerated in the church of Saint Anne in Vienna. Countless cures and conversions have taken place at Apt, the first, if not the most famous shrine of Saint Anne.

Saint Anne d'Auray

Less ancient than Apt, but even better known and more popular is the Sanctuary of Saint Anne d'Auray in Brittany, chosen by the Mother of Mary herself as a place where she wished to be specially honoured. It was to a Breton peasant that she made her desire known in a series of wonderful visions. The Bretons were always remarkable for their intense devotion to Saint Anne, whom they regard as their Protectress and Patroness, and whom they address with tender familiarity as their "bonne-mere," the Breton child's term of endearment for its grandmother. The saint showed her appreciation of this attitude in a striking manner a little over three hundred years ago in 1623 and 1624. She appeared several times to a humble peasant, named Yves Nicolazic, who lived outside the small village of Keranna (named in honour of Saint Anne). There was nothing remarkable about this man. He had reached his fortieth year, and was just a sincere pious Catholic, going regularly to the sacraments, and constantly to be seen with his Rosary beads in his hands. Like every Breton, he was devoted to Saint Anne, speaking of her always as his "good mistress." One pious habit he especially had, which doubtless was particularly pleasing to his holy Patroness. He was accustomed to visit frequently and to pray upon a certain piece of ground where tradition said that an ancient chapel of Saint Anne had stood. Perhaps as he prayed there he longed that Holy Mass would be celebrated there once more in honour of Our Lady's mother. His simple pious neighbours neither wondered nor laughed at Yves. He seems to have

been generally respected, but taken very much for granted, until Saint Anne picked him out as the person best fitted to accomplish her design of restoring her chapel at Keranna.

One night, in August 1623, he saw in his room a hand holding a lighted wax torch. He was naturally startled, even frightened by this strange experience. It was repeated several times in his own field, called the "Bocenno" where the ancient chapel had stood. There was one part of this field which could never be ploughed, the oxen always refusing to pass over it. The mysterious torch-bearing hand hovered over this spot in particular, and it was seen by many of the villagers besides Nicolazic himself. Saint Anne evidently thought that the poor peasant's mind needed to be very gently and gradually prepared for his mission. At length she appeared to him in the form of a stately and venerable lady, clad in a snow-white robe, with the now familiar torch in her right hand and a luminous cloud beneath her feet. This happened one evening when he and his brother were driving home their cows, and the men were first made aware of a supernatural presence by the unaccountable behaviour of the beasts, which suddenly stood motionless, and could not be persuaded to stir. Nicolazic and his brother-in-law who saw the vision together fled from it in terror. They regretted their cowardice presently, and returned, but the lady had disappeared.

She came again soon, and after that often appeared to Nicolazic. At last, she spoke to him, and bade him tell his parish priest that she wished her chapel to be rebuilt on the spot in the Bocenno field where she had been honoured long ago. He obeyed very unwillingly, but met with a decided rebuff. The Rector (or parish priest) would scarcely listen to him. The Catholic clergy so far from encouraging superstition as Protestants accuse them of doing, always take a severely critical view of alleged supernatural

occurrences, realizing the harm that may be done in a community by one impostor or visionary, and the weakening of faith in the miraculous that may follow on exposure of fraud or insanity. But the Rector and Curate of Keranna carried this commendable caution to excess. Even when an ancient statue of Saint Anne was discovered in the Bocenno field, under the guidance of the heavenly vision, they remained incredulous, and treated Nicolazic with harshness and contempt. In punishment of their obstinacy, they were both afflicted with illness. The Rector on being cured through the intercession of Saint Anne at once ceased his opposition to Nicolazic, did all in his power to hasten the erection of the chapel, and laboured during the rest of his life to spread devotion to the saint who had so generously forgiven his disobedience. The Curate also repented, but continued to suffer until his death a few years later.

The news of the miraculous finding of the statue spread like wildfire through the country. Pilgrims came in crowds to Keranna, which gradually dropped that name, and became known as Saint Anne d'Auray. Subscriptions poured in, and the chapel was speedily erected. Saint Anne had repeatedly told Nicolazic that Keranna would become the most famous of her shrines, and one of the most renowned places of pilgrimage in the world. He lived to see the fulfilment of this prophecy of his "good mistress." To avoid publicity he retired from Keranna to Pluneret. He received no extraordinary favours himself from Saint Anne, except the gift, after fifteen years of married life of two children, a son and a daughter. Nor was he again favoured by a vision of Saint Anne until a short time before his death, which occurred in 1645, at the age of sixty-three. The Bretons have always venerated him as a saint but it is only recently that his Cause has been introduced at Rome.

Countless miracles have been wrought and extraordinary conversions have taken place during three centuries or so at the shrine of Saint Anne d'Auray, and the pilgrimages thereto never ceased even during the terrors of the French Revolution. Nothing could stamp out the devotion in Brittany, and it is safe to prophesy that it will last as long as the Breton race. A glorious cathedral now replaces the old church in the Bocenno field, and hundreds of thousands of pilgrims visit it each year.

Saint Anne Beaupre

In addition to Apt and Auray there is yet a third famous Sanctuary dedicated to Saint Anne, that of Beaupré in Canada. The first French settlers in that part of the American continent were chiefly Bretons, and they did not leave their love of Saint Anne behind them in their home country. According to the legendary account of the origin of Beaupré, some Breton sailors when caught in a storm on the Saint Lawrence river besought, as of custom the aid of their Patroness good Saint Anne, and promised, if rescued, to build a chapel in her honour wherever they should land. When after a night of misery they reached in safety the north bank of the river at Beaupré they did not forget their vow. In haste, they erected a little wooden chapel, which was soon enlarged by the generosity of an old mariner resident in Beaupré. From that time, about the middle of the seventeenth century, the usual wonders associated with the devotion to Saint Anne started, and drew the attention of the people of Canada to the spot. The first little chapel had expanded by 1876 into a great basilica, of which the Redemptorist Fathers took charge. It was unfortunately destroyed by fire in 1922. The statue and relics of Saint Anne were untouched by the flames, and the speedy restoration of the church was set on foot immediately, owing to the fervour of the French Canadians. Rome sent to this

shrine at the end of the nineteenth century the wrist bone of Saint Anne, now venerated as the great Relic of Beaupré. The Church of Saint Jean Baptiste in New York contains a portion of the saint's forearm, bestowed by Pope Leo XIII. The pilgrimages to Beaupré increase year by year. Devotion to Saint Anne, wherever planted, strikes its roots deeply, and spreads with astonishing rapidity. This is not surprising when we consider how abundantly Saint Anne showers favours on those who have recourse to her. No other saint seems to have more influence at the Court of Heaven than the Mother of the Mother of God.

Devotion to Saint Anne in Ireland

The Cult of Saint Anne was introduced into England by the Normans, and at a later date, these brought it with them to Ireland. In the Middle Ages, devotion to Saint Anne was practised to a degree of which we have no conception nowadays. Her feast was a Holy Day of obligation in England and Ireland, and in both countries innumerable churches were built in her honour, foundations were made under her patronage, and guilds dedicated to her. Devotion to her was closely associated with devotion to the Blessed Virgin, and to her Immaculate Conception. In England of course all this ceased at the "Reformation." Veneration of both Mother and Daughter died out at the same time there and cannot revive until the day when England becomes once more a Catholic nation. Saint Anne stands always near her daughter, and we may hope that her prayers will avail to bring back to Our Lady the country once known as the "Dowry of Mary." In our own country of Ireland, devotion to Saint Anne never died out as it did in England, but, though it has revived of recent years, it is not as great as it was long ago. Her feast was observed as a Holy Day of obligation long ago in Ireland and the most important of the Dublin guilds was that of Saint Anne, which had its chantry chapel in the Church of Saint

Audoen, High Street. The present church of the same name in the same street stands close to the site of the ancient chapel of Saint Anne which was founded and endowed in 1430 by Henry VI. The guild connected with it supported six priests, who celebrated Masses for the souls of the founders at altars dedicated to Our Lady, Saint Anne and other saints. The guild held property worth about a thousand pounds a year, which was afterwards iniquitously seized and devoted to Protestant purposes, instead of to the Catholic charities for which it was intended by the pious donors. A fresco or wall painting, having Saint Anne for its subject was discovered in old Saint Audoen's some years ago, on the wall of the chapel of Saint Anne.

If our faith had not been driven underground by cruel and prolonged persecution and penal enactments we might have shrines and great pilgrimages in honour of Saint Anne equal to those of Apt, Auray, or Beaupré. For centuries, all open expression of our religious life was denied to us. Our forefathers held on heroically to essentials, the Mass, the Sacraments and - where these could not be had - the Rosary. They cherished the roots of Catholicity, but, until recently, no flowers could be permitted to appear. Now, however, there are welcome signs of expansion in various directions. A notable revival has begun of the ancient devotion to Saint Anne, its centre being, as is fitting the modern church of Saint Audoen, so close to the site on which Saint Anne was formerly so honoured. The beautiful shrine of Saint Anne in Saint Audoen's Church draws immense numbers of the faithful to the feet of the saint, especially on her feast-day, and on Tuesdays. The custom of venerating Saint Anne in a special manner on Tuesdays is of very ancient date.

If devotion to Saint Anne's shrine in new Saint Audoen's shadows forth an Irish Saint Anne d'Auray on that spot, so close to her ancient chapel, so surely does the exquisite gem

of architectural beauty in the picturesque vale of Shanganagh promise to become the Irish "Beaupré." Already does the "grandmother" of Christ draw her votaries in numbers to this chaste and beautiful edifice, dedicated to her, and where her picture with her beloved Daughter beside her, hangs above the altar.

The foundation-stone of the Church of Saint Anne at Shankill was laid by His Grace, Most Rev. Dr. Byrne, Archbishop of Dublin, July 26th, 1931, and the blessing and opening of this new Sanctuary of Saint Anne took place on July 30th, 1933, the Archbishop again officiating. The materials used in its construction are all Irish, as is its workmanship. When completed it will be indeed a glorious sanctuary. The following appreciation of the new church is taken from the "Irish Independent" of August 5th, 1933: "From the 'Shankill' (old church) to Saint Anne's lovely sanctuary is a matter of 1400 years. How the hermit Dolgan of Carraig Dolgan (vulgarly known as Katty Gallagher) and the sainted dead of 'ould Rathmichil' must have rejoiced on last Sunday at the sight of the immediate though remote successor to their own church! "Among the great concourse of people attending the opening of the church the fine body of Foresters forming the bodyguard of the Archbishop recalled the fact that hundreds of years ago a similar company of Foresters guarded the forests of the Archbishop of Dublin from Glencree to Tallaght. In their picturesque uniforms, and with their reverential demeanour, they gave evidence of the faith and piety of old Dublin, so fostered for centuries by the Guild of Saint Anne.

"The vale of Shanganagh rich in beauty and story lends itself to, and requires its church to be, a thing of beauty.

"Saint Anne's Church is an ornament, a gem set in a rich cluster. Its architects have never set a brighter gem in emerald green.

"The unique site called to their artistic sense for an exceptional facade, they have given one reminiscent of the Rock of Cashel.

"But is all the glory of the King's House from without? By no means. Without being too critical, one may say that little attention has been paid in the past to the interior by Irish church builders. But it is not so in this case. Father Sherwin has impressed his mind and his taste on the Church of Saint Anne. The interior - what a revelation it is! Unexpected, because of the rich exterior, yet all the more welcome. One can gaze, and return to gaze - which is a proof that it grips and retains one's interest. Everyone who enters wishes to re-enter to obtain a new view, a new idea. It is full of ideas, new colours, new forms, new perspective. What a glorious sanctuary when it will be complete! The only regret is that it is incomplete. Let us hope Father Sherwin will soon be able to finish this lovely work. All should be proud to lend a hand.

"Let us view it as it is.

"The most striking feature of the building as such, is the artistic arches and chaste columns separating nave and aisle. Here the colour note of the church is struck, the lovely blue of the polished columns blending with the subdued white. That note is carried aloft and expanded in the exquisite windows, reminding one of fleecy cloud in azure sky.

"A bold but very happy thought introduced the Congress Cross to crown the graceful design.

"The furnishings, especially of the altar are chosen with the same regard to chaste designs and artistic execution. The sanctuary lamp, a replica of the Ardagh Chalice, with pendant ring, after the Tara Brooch, the candlesticks and

candelabra in form and workmanship of rare beauty, and the rich golden door of the Tabernacle, with its "Cross of Cong" and precious stones. The worshipper is enabled to gaze on the resting place of the King of Kings without being blinded by an offending chancel window. Many other details are well worthy of admiration. In fundamentals and in artistry Saint Anne's Sanctuary at Shankill is a model."

Saint Anne, Patroness of Christian Mothers

Saint Anne obtains many graces, priceless graces for those who invoke her, but she grants her maternal assistance in particular to Christian mothers. She preserves peace in married life, restores harmony in discord, and wonderfully changes a husband's bad disposition. She protects the birth of children in an extraordinary manner, bestows blessings that lighten the task of rearing children properly, brings wayward children back upon the right path, obtains restoration of health for the sick mother, preserves her precious life for the helpless children and prevents the loss of husband and father. Once when Saint Bridget Sweden, who was married, and had a large family, was praying, Saint Anne, to whom she had a special devotion, appeared to her, and said, "Behold me, my daughter Bridget. I am Anne, whom you love. Know how full of mercy, goodness and affection I am for all who love me. Those who live chastely and peacefully in the state of matrimony, I will love and protect in a special manner, I will grant their petitions whenever they take refuge in me."

How necessary, especially in these days, is Saint Anne's assistance for mothers in bringing up their children. That great saint obtains the grace for mothers to look upon their children as God's greatest blessing, and to spare no pains to train them, from their infancy in the love of God. How beautiful it is to see a mother training the baby lips of her

child to utter the Sacred Names, and training the tiny hands to form the Sign of the Cross. We see Anne teaching her daughter the sacred truths of religion, and so also should every mother train her child to read and love pious books. Children, too, should meditate upon the example given them by the youthful Virgin, as she stands at her mother's side, hanging upon each word uttered by the beloved parent. If a picture of Saint Anne with the Holy Virgin beside her were hung in every living-room in Ireland what an incentive and reminder it would be to mothers and daughters so to behave that no word or act of theirs would be unworthy of the presence of Mary and Anne. If it is good mothers who often implant the germs of future saints, it is, alas! equally true that many souls are lost through the indifference, neglect and conduct of bad mothers. A French physician who had witnessed the death of more than two thousand mothers once remarked, "I have always found a Christian mother's death to be most beautiful and edifying."

The following example is one of many instances which show us the happiness of a Christian mother's death-bed.

In the forties of the last century, (the nineteenth,) a Christian mother lay dying in a village of the Black Forest in Baden. Seven of her children had pre-deceased her. Suddenly she raised herself, and with a cry of joy, exclaimed "O, my little children!"

"What do you see?" inquired the priest who was beside her.

"All my seven children are there," was the reply, as she sank back upon the pillow, and went to join her dear ones.

Saint Anne, Patroness of All Christians

In the glorious ages of Faith, the Middle Ages, Saint Anne was fondly called "Comfortress of the Sorrowing, Mother of

the Poor, Health of the Sick, Protectress of Widows, Patron of the Labourer, Patroness of the Childless, Help of expectant Mothers."

Saint Anne was spared neither trials nor humiliations, for years she suffered, and therefore understands how to comfort the sorrowful.

Saint Anne loved the poor, and she and her husband bestowed a third of their property on them. Saint Anne continues her charity in Heaven. She helps the poor often in a wonderful manner, and she helps the dying, who are poorest of all.

The number of cures wrought by Saint Anne's intercession is countless, and she has been the Health of the Sick for centuries, and is still the same loving mother.

Saint Anne was long childless, and often obtains the gift of children for those who invoke her, if such be the Will of God.

She also guards mothers in their hour of danger, and obtains the favour from God that their children may not lose the grace of holy baptism.

She helps those who toil for their daily bread, as she was a toiler herself. In a word there is no limit to the beneficent activity of good Saint Anne in Heaven, as all her clients have good reason to know, and having helped us during life, she will not forget us at the hour of our death, as the following experience related by a priest will testify: "It happened when I was assistant pastor in the parish of N--. One night I was aroused by the ringing of the door-bell. A strange stately lady called up to me. 'Father, please go quickly, and take the Blessed Sacrament to a servant in a house up on the hill, for she will not live through the night. The sexton is awaiting you in the church.' The sexton had been awakened by the

same person. I took the Blessed Sacrament, and we started for the house to which the lady had directed me. To our surprise, we found the house locked, and when we knocked were informed that there was no one ill there. We concluded that some worthless person had deceived us. In order that I would not need to return with the Blessed Sacrament, one of the servants declared her readiness to go to Confession and to receive Holy Communion. Her pious offer was willingly accepted. During her Confession, the servant experienced a slight indisposition. She finished her Confession and received Holy Communion. Before long, she began to feel worse, and was obliged to take to her bed. Shortly after, it was evident that her end was approaching. I administered Extreme Unction, and imparted the Indulgence for the dying. Scarcely was this done when she died. Above her bed hung pictures of many saints, among which was a large decorated representation of Saint Anne. The inmates of the house informed me that the pious servant had practised special devotion to Saint Anne, and in her honour abstained from milk every Tuesday. "I have no doubt that the woman who called the sexton and me, was Saint Anne herself, as she desired to obtain for her client this last great favour. Without the good saint's gracious intervention this would not have been possible."

Let this example move us to practise special devotion to Saint Anne to obtain a happy death, on which depends our eternity.

Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs - Saint Anne, July 26

Saint Anne, or Ann, is not mentioned in the Bible. It was only in legendary books of the early Christian centuries that the names of Mary's parents were given as Joachim and Anne. Since the Fathers of the Church rejected the use of such legendary sources, the faithful in Europe had no feast in honor of our Lord's grandparents. In the Middle East, however, the veneration of Saint Anne can be traced back to the fourth century.

The Crusaders brought the name and legend of Saint Anne to Europe, and the famous Dominican Jacobus de Voragine (1298) printed the story in his Golden Legend. From that time on the popular veneration of the saint spread into all parts of the Christian world. It was encouraged by the religious orders of the Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinians, and Carmelites. In southern France a Feast of Saint Anne was celebrated as early as the fourteenth century. Pope Urban VI in 1378 extended it to England at the king's request. Not until 1584, however, did the feast become universal, when Pope Gregory XIII prescribed it for the whole Church.

As grandmother of Christ and mother of Mary, Saint Anne soon became the patron of married women, and for childless couples a special aid in obtaining children. According to legend she was married three times, first to Joachim, after his death to Cleophas, and finally to Salomas. This detail of the ancient story inspired young women to turn to her for help in finding a husband. After all, since she had had three husbands herself, should she not be able and willing to provide at least one bridegroom for those who trustingly

appealed to her? In the languages of all European nations young women implored her:

I beg you, holy mother Anne,
Send me a good and loving man.

Her patronage of fertility was extended also to the soil. Thus she became a patron of rain. It is a popular saying in Italy that "rain is Saint Anne's gift"; in Germany, July rain was called "Saint Anne's dowry."

Finally, the gentle grandmother of the Lord is everywhere invoked as one of the great helpers for various needs of body and soul. Many churches have been erected to her, most of them becoming famous centers of pilgrimages. One of the best-known shrines in this part of the world is Saint Anne de Beaupre in Quebec, Canada.

From the eighteenth century on, Anne, which means "grace," was used more and more as a favorite name for girls. At the beginning of the nineteenth century it was the most popular girls' name in central Europe, surpassing even that of Mary. This preference was based on a famous saying of past centuries, "All Annes are beautiful." Naturally, parents wanted to assure this benefit for their baby daughters by calling them Anne or by adding Anne to a first name. Thus we have the many traditional names containing Anne or Ann (Mary Ann, Marianne, Marian, Ann Marie, Joanne, Elizabeth Ann, Lillian, Martha Ann, Louise Ann, Patricia Ann).

A hundred years ago there still remained the custom in many parts of Europe of celebrating Saint Anne's Day as a festival "of all Annes," meaning all beautiful girls. Dressed in their finery the bevy would parade through the streets with their escorts, bands would serenade them in parks and

squares, balls would be held (both Johann Strausses composed "Anne Polkas" for this festival). Saint Anne's Eve was the day of receptions for debutantes at court and in private homes. Public amusements, including fireworks, entertained the crowds. The warm summer night was alive with laughter, beauty, music, and lights. And all of it was still connected in the hearts and minds of the participants with a tribute to Saint Anne, whose feast day shed its radiance upon this enchanting celebration.

Liturgical Prayer: O God, who didst deign to confer on Saint Anne the grace to be the mother of her who was to give birth to Thy only-begotten Son: mercifully grant us, who celebrate her feast, that we may be helped by her intercession.

Butler's Lives of the Saints - Saint Anne, Mother of the Blessed Virgin

The Hebrew word Anne signifies gracious. Saint Joachim and Saint Anne, the parents of the blessed Virgin Mary, are justly honoured in the church, and their virtue is highly extolled by Saint John Damascen. The emperor Justinian I. built a church at Constantinople in honour of Saint Anne, about the year 550. Codinus mentions another built by Justinian II in 705. Her body was brought from Palestine to Constantinople in 710, whence some portions of her relics have been dispersed in the West. F. Cuper the Bollandist has collected a great number of miracles wrought through her intercession.

God has been pleased by sensible effects to testify how much he is honoured by the devotion of the faithful to this saint, who was the great model of virtue to all engaged in the married state, and charged with the education of children. It was a sublime dignity and a great honour for this saint to give to a lost world the advocate of mercy, and to be parent of the mother of God. But it was a far greater happiness to be, under God, the greatest instrument of her virtue, and to be spiritually her mother by a holy education in perfect innocence and sanctity. Saint Anne being herself a vessel of grace, not by name only, but by the possession of that rich treasure, was chosen by God to form his most beloved spouse to perfect virtue; and her pious care of this illustrious daughter was the greatest means of her own sanctification and her glory in the church of God to the end of ages. It is a lesson to all parents whose principal duty is the holy education of their children. By this they glorify their Creator, perpetuate his honour on earth to future ages, and sanctify their own souls. Saint Paul says, that it is by the education of their children that parents are to be saved. Nor

will he allow any one who has had children, ever to be admitted to serve the altar, whose sons do not, by their holy conduct, give proofs of a virtuous education. Nevertheless, we see parents solicitous about the corporal qualifications of their children, and earnest to procure them an establishment in the world; yet supinely careless in purchasing them virtue, in which alone their true happiness consists. This reflection drew tears from Crates, a heathen philosopher, who desired to mount on the highest place in his city and cry out with all his strength: "Citizens, what is it you think of? You employ all your time in heaping up riches to leave to your children; yet take no care to cultivate their souls with virtue, as if an estate were more precious than themselves."

Weninger's Lives of the Saints - Saint Anne, Mother of the Blessed Virgin

Saint Anne, the mother of the Blessed Virgin, was a native of Bethlehem, a city two miles distant from Jerusalem, frequently mentioned in Holy Writ. Having passed her youth in unstained purity, she was married to a man named Joachim, who was born at Nazareth in Galilee, with whom she lived in such love and harmony, and at the same time so piously, that one could justly say of them what Saint Luke writes of Zachary and Elizabeth: "They were both just before God, walking in all the commandments and justifications of the Lord without blame." They divided their income into three parts, the first of which was used for the honor of God and to adorn the Temple, the second to assist the poor, and the third for their own subsistence. They employed the day in prayer, work suitable to their station in life, and charitable deeds.

Their only grief was, that, although so long married, they had no issue; and a barren marriage was at that time considered a disgrace, nay almost a sign of a divine curse. Saddened by this sorrow, Saint Anne, as well as her spouse, prayed with many sighs and tears, that God would take pity on them and remove the disgrace that was weighing them down. But when, after having prayed long and earnestly, they were not heard, they determined to bear patiently the will of the Almighty. As, however, Saint Anne knew that God required continual prayer, and that He had not given to men a certain time to ask for grace, she ceased not to implore heaven with great confidence, for all that she believed was for His honor and her own salvation. Being one day in the Temple, she felt her distress so deeply, that she wept bitterly, but she remembered, at the same time, that there

had been another Anne, spouse of Elcana, who had been afflicted as she was, but whose prayers God at last had answered, making her the mother of the great prophet Samuel. While thinking of this, she perceived in herself an invincible desire to beg the Lord for a like grace. Hence she repeated her prayer with earnest fervor, promising at the same time, that if God would grant her a child, she would consecrate it in the Temple to His divine service, as the above-mentioned Anne had done.

God answered the trusting, tearful prayer of His servant, and sent her, according to the opinion of the Holy Fathers, an angel, who announced to her that she would give birth to a child which, blessed among women, would become the mother of the long-expected Saviour of the world. It is also believed that the angel told Saint Anne the name which she should give to the blessed fruit of her womb. The same revelation was made to Saint Joachim, and the happiness of both and their gratitude to the Almighty can be easily imagined. Their happiness was crowned when Saint Anne gave birth to her who was elected by God from all eternity to become the mother of His only Son. Who can describe the joy with which Anne pressed her newborn child to her heart, or the solicitude and love with which she brought it up? The knowledge that her blessed daughter was chosen by God to so great a dignity was incentive enough to leave nothing undone for her welfare. The mind of the blessed child was so far beyond her years, and her whole being so angelically innocent, that her education was an easy task, and Saint Anne deemed herself the happiest mother in the world, because God had entrusted to her so priceless a child. The graces which, through the presence of the Blessed Virgin, she received from Heaven, cannot but have been innumerable. For if, in after times, the house of Elizabeth and Zachary was, by a visit from Mary, filled with heavenly blessings, who can doubt that Saint Anne, who was the

mother of the Blessed Virgin, was gifted with extraordinary graces? Knowing, however, that Mary was not only a precious treasure lent her by heaven, but also had consecrated herself to the service of the Almighty, Saint Anne did not fail to return to God what she had received from Him and to offer willingly what she had so willingly promised. Hardly had Mary reached the age of three years, when Anne and Joachim went with her to the temple at Jerusalem, and presenting her to the Priest, consecrated her through him to the Almighty. Nothing could have been more painful to the pious parents than to separate from so perfect a child; but as they were more zealous for the glory of God than for their own joy, even though it was so pious, they made this sacrifice without complaining. Thus Mary was received among the number of those who, under the direction of the priests, served God in the Temple, and were led in the path of virtue. After they had piously offered this agreeable sacrifice, the parents of the Blessed Virgin returned home, and spent the remainder of their days in good works, which were continued by Saint Anne, when she became a widow by the death of her holy spouse. As she had been an example to the virgins before her marriage, as well as a perfect model of a wife, so also was she in her widowhood, a shining light, for all those qualities which Saint Paul afterwards required of a Christian widow, in his first Epistle to Timothy. She went frequently to Jerusalem to see her holy daughter, and died, according to several authors, in the 79th year of her age. Mary, who at that time still lived in the temple, closed her eyes.

As one cannot give to the Blessed Virgin a higher title than to call her Mother of God, thus Saint Anne cannot be more exalted than when she is called the mother of her who bore the Son of God. And for the very reason that she was chosen to be her mother, we must believe that the Almighty favored her here upon earth, with grace above all the Saints, and

raised her to high glory in heaven. Hence we may rightly suppose, that her intercession with God is most powerful; and this is also testified by many examples.

Practical Considerations

- When Saint Anne perceived that, notwithstanding her many prayers, the Almighty gave her no issue, she submitted to His divine will, and bore her trial with patience. Thus also should Christian people act, when God proves them in a similar manner, for all He does is the best for them. He has His reasons for acting thus, and these reasons are just. Perhaps they would go to perdition if they had children, as many a parent sins greatly in regard to his children, and is condemned on their account. When Saint Anne at length received from God what she had so constantly prayed for during many years, she gave due thanks to Him, educated her daughter piously, and early consecrated her to the service of Heaven. Thus should all Christian parents act. Their greatest care should be to teach their children early to serve God and bring them up for heaven. If one of their children has a calling for a religious life, they must not oppose it, nor, by any unrighteous means, keep the child from it. Saint Anne deprived herself of the great comfort which her daughter's presence gave her, when for the love of God, she consecrated her, by the hands of the priest, to the service of the Most High. Why shall not Christian parents do the same and willingly consecrate their child to God, to whom it belongs much more than to themselves? They may commit great sin, and may even draw upon themselves eternal condemnation, and may be the cause of their child's destruction, if they oppose the divine call.
- Saint Anne prayed long, yet was not heard. She, however, complained not against God, but continued in her prayers

with undiminished confidence until she at last received what she had asked. God has many reasons for not always hearing our prayers immediately. We sometimes pray when we are not in a state of grace; or we live in sin without repenting, or without the intention of bettering our life. In such cases, our prayers cannot be acceptable to God. We also sometimes pray without devotion and reverence. And can such a prayer have power? At another time, we pray only for things which God knows to be hurtful to us, although we may imagine that they are for our good. In such cases, God bestows a grace upon us by not hearing us. Often also the Almighty does not hear us, in punishment of our iniquities. We have so often offended Him, and have forfeited His grace, that we cannot reasonably expect that He should grant our request immediately. We have so frequently been deaf when God called to us; how can we ask that He should directly hear us? "What right have we," asks Saint Salvianus, "to complain, when God does not hear us, or, so to speak, despises our prayers when we have so often not listened to Him, and so frequently despised His laws? What is more just than that He should not listen to us, because we heard not Him, and that He should despise our prayers, as we did His laws?" Further, God does not always hear us immediately, in order that we may pray more fervently and esteem so much more highly the favors He bestows. He does it also to try our patience and our trust in His mercy, or that we may be more deserving of His grace by continual prayers. Finally, besides other reasons, He may do it also to give us something better than we asked for. When all this is rightly considered, tell me, can you justly complain when the Almighty hears not your prayers immediately? Continue in them. Perform them in the right spirit, and you will experience the truth of the words of Saint Bernard: "God either gives us what we ask, or something else, which is more useful to us."

Mothers of History - Saint Anne, the Mother of Our Lady

A proverb, we are told, is the crystallisation of the experience and consent of ages. It is from a proverb that we could, perhaps, best derive the greatness of Saint Anne, the mother of Our Lady.

One proverb has it that the greatness of a mother is her children. Our Lady is the greatest Mother of history, but She is also the daughter of Saint Anne, the only daughter, in fact the only child.

Saint Anne's claim to greatness is not a multiple claim; She has only one claim; but that one is all sufficient, all explanatory. She is the mother of Mary, who is the Mother of Our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Singularly blessed by God was she who is the Mother of 'Our tainted nature's solitary boast.' Expression of the place Saint Anne holds in the affection of her devout clients is nowhere better illustrated than by the fact that she is called 'Good Saint Anne.' What a wealth of meaning is implied in that simple little adjective 'good'. It expresses in a word all we would like to say in praise of Mary's mother.

It must surprise us somewhat that Holy Scripture, while it speaks much of other great women, as Judith or Esther, makes no mention of Saint Anne, who was mother of the Blessed Virgin, and of whom these other women were only types. We cannot penetrate the hidden designs of God, but from this silence of Sacred Scripture, we dare infer that Saint Anne led a retired life.

We depend upon what has been handed down to us by tradition for our knowledge of Saint Anne.

Saint Anne's husband was Saint Joachim. An ancient tradition tells us that Joachim and Anne had long been childless. To be childless was considered a wife's greatest disgrace among the Israelites. For many years, the hand of the Lord weighed heavily upon Saint Anne. She was tried in the furnace of humiliation before her race.

When God intends to elevate a person to great dignity and sanctity, He invariably humbles that person in various ways. Anne, the wife, was humbled for years, nor was the reproach removed until, in God's good time, she became Anne, the mother of Mary. In patience and resignation Saint Anne, the childless wife, endured all the contempt heaped upon her and ceased not, in humble unshaken confidence, to pray to Almighty God, for Saint Anne well knew that 'no word shall be impossible with God.'

Such virtue must needs call down the favour of the Almighty. Purified in adversity, found worthy in humiliations, and confirmed in sanctity, as she was, the Lord could now give to her the child of grace, that should tend to bring joy to the whole world.

Saint Anne was great before God, not only on account of her humility, but also on account of her magnanimity - her greatness of soul; her big generous desires to please God; for she had vowed to offer her holy child, the blessed fruit of her fervent prayers, to the Lord. What renunciation! What a sacrifice! But Saint Anne knew that a mother's love is not a rival of Divine Love; only the foolish make it so, and begrudge their son or daughter to the service of God.

Far from being a rival of Divine Love, a mother's love is a reflection of it. God is Love, and to give us some idea of Divine Love, God gives us mothers. A mother's love is a tiny spark in the heart of a woman from the mighty furnace, which is Divine Love. Saint Anne loved her daughter dearly; but she remembered with gratitude that a child is God's gift, and so love of God triumphed over mother love.

Just where Saint Anne lived when Our Lady was born is uncertain. The strongest opinion seems to be that of Saint John Damascene, who spent a great deal of his life quite close to the Holy City, and is thus an excellent witness to the Christian traditions of Jerusalem. He tells us that the Holy Virgin first saw the light of day in her father's house of which we read in the Gospel, where Our Lord cured the paralytic.

It was the custom among the Jews to name their children, in the midst of the assembled family, the ninth day after birth. Saint Joachim's own name means Expectation; Anne signifies Grace. Gracious assuredly in the eyes of God was she who now named her child Miriam, a name of Egyptian origin; in Greek or Latin, Maria, which signifies both Sovereign Lady, or Princess, and Sea of Sorrow.

But we who wish to show Saint Anne's greatness always remember that her child was saluted by the Angel: 'Hail, full of Grace' - the destined Mother of God.

Saint Anne's feast is kept on July 26th. The Church has chosen a passage from Saint John Damascene's writings to be read at Matins (the Office of Readings, in the morning) on the feast. It sums up for us the greatness of Saint Anne. 'Now even as Anna of the Old Testament, when she was stricken with barrenness, gave birth to Samuel as the fruit of prayer and promise; in like manner the second Anna received from God, the Mother of God promised to her entreaties so that in

fruitfulness she had not to yield to any of the illustrious matrons who had gone before her. Thus Grace (for this is the meaning of the word Anna) is mother of the Lady (the signification of the name of Mary), who in truth was made the Lady over all created things when she became the Mother of the Creator.'

Devotion to Saint Anne, by Father Reginald

Devotion to Saint Anne is one of the strongest of Catholic devotions of the present day. It has increased rapidly in these islands of late, or, rather, it has enjoyed a strong revival, for this one of the oldest devotions. The cult and honour of Saint Anne was an inseparable part of the lives of medieval Christians, but suffered a partial decline in the last few centuries, but now Saint Anne is regaining her proper place in the lives and devotions of Catholics.

How can we best show our devotion to her, as to all other saints? By praying to her and honouring her, but especially by the sincerest form of devotion and love, which is imitation. It is not enough to pray to the saints, to ask for favours constantly. If we would be their true clients, we must model our lives on theirs and follow in their footsteps, imitating their virtues. Thus must we act, in our devotions to Saint Anne. If we are husbands or wives, especially, we must follow the example of Joachim and Anne, that perfect ideal couple, helpful and kind and tolerant to each other always, trusting each other implicitly and always putting the best construction on each other's actions.

They bore each other's burdens at all times, shared each other's crosses, without imputing blame on either; especially that heavy cross of sterility, they bore without reproach, trusting and praying instead of separating, as they were legally entitled to do. They joined, instead, in trustful loving prayer and supplication, with resignation waiting behind all, that if it was God's Will He would have them a child and if not, that His Will might be done. Let childless couples, then, weighed down with the cross of sterility, pray to Saint Anne

and supplicate her to use her powerful influence with Mary and Mary's Son to remove their barrenness and send them the gift of a child. But, above all, let them imitate her - her humility, her faith, her loving trust and perseverance in prayer; and if their prayer is not answered, do not let them be downcast, for Anne will obtain for them other great blessings instead.

Pictorial Lives of the Saints - Saint Anne

Saint Anne was the spouse of Saint Joachim, and was chosen by God to be the mother of Mary, His own Blessed Mother on earth. They were both of the royal house of David, and their lives were wholly occupied in prayer and good works. One thing only was wanting to their union - they were childless, and this was held as a bitter misfortune among the Jews. At length, when Anne was an aged woman, Mary was born, the fruit rather of grace than of nature, and the child more of God than of man. With the birth of Mary the aged Anne began a new life: she watched her every movement with reverent tenderness, and felt herself hourly sanctified by the presence of her immaculate child. But she had vowed her daughter to God, to God Mary had consecrated herself again, and to Him Anne gave her back. Mary was three years old when Anne and Joachim led her up the Temple steps, saw her pass by herself into the inner sanctuary, and then saw her no more. Thus was Anne left childless in her lone old age, and deprived of her purest earthly joy just when she needed it most. She humbly adored the Divine Will, and began again to watch and pray, till God called her to unending rest with the Father and the Spouse of Mary in the home of Mary's Child.

Reflection - Saint Anne is glorious among the Saints, not only as the mother of Mary, but because she gave Mary to God. Learn from her to reverence a divine vocation as the highest privilege, and to sacrifice every natural tie, however holy, at the call of God.

The Mother of Our Lady, Good Saint Anne, by a Devotee

Many if not most of the saints have had holy mothers, mothers who understood the tremendous responsibility of Christian motherhood, and who strove to instill into their children's minds the truths of religion from the first moment of the dawn of reason. We read of the mother of Saint Louis, King of France, that she repeated to him constantly, "My son, I would rather see you dead at my feet than guilty of one mortal sin." We read of the mother of the sainted Curé d'Ars that she had consecrated him to God even before his birth, and never allowed him to forget that he belonged in a special manner to the Most High. We read of the mother of Saint Nicholas of Tolentino that she kept repeating the names of Jesus and Mary into his infant ears. We know of Saint Monica's life-long struggle with Satan for the soul of her son, afterwards the great Saint Augustine, of the saintly mother of the "Little Flower," Saint Thérèse, in our own times, and of hosts of others. What a privilege and what a responsibility is a mother's! It would almost seem as though she could make her child a saint if she set her mind to it, if she began with the infant, with the tender sapling, training it to grow in the right way while it is capable of being trained. Surely, no commendation is too high for a good mother.

And if the mothers of saints and all good mothers deserve to be praised and honoured, what praise and honour are great enough for her who was worthy to be mother of the Queen of Saints, good Saint Anne, grandmother according to the flesh of Our Saviour Jesus Christ? Devotion to Saint Anne is the spontaneous warm and hearty outpouring of the true Catholic heart which loves Mary. One feels how Mary must

have loved and revered her mother. The Immaculate Virgin obeyed and practised in their utmost perfection the commandments of the Law. Next to Jesus Christ Himself, none other ever honoured and obeyed parents as she did, and with that honour and obedience went the most intense filial love.

What must have been the holiness of that parent who was made the mother of the only one among the descendants of Adam conceived and born without stain of sin? God fashioned Saint Anne to be the perfect mother of a still more perfect daughter. He trained her in the school of humiliation, of hope deferred, of prayers unanswered, of years of disappointment borne with perfect meekness and resignation, and then, in her old age the miracle was wrought, the prayers of years were answered, and oh! what an answer! The Immaculate Mary was conceived in her womb. She became the mother of her who was to be "the glory of Jerusalem, the honour of our people, the joy of Israel, above all women upon the earth." In a word, Saint Anne was the mother of the Mother of God. She was not alone to bring forth a pure, beautiful and glorious child, but she was further given the charge of preparing and educating her daughter for the sublime dignity which awaited her.

When one meets a virtuous and amiable girl it is natural to say, "That girl has been well brought up. She must have had a good mother." But what a girl was Mary! Of her, Saint Ambrose says "What more noble than the Mother of God. She was a virgin in body and mind, whose candour was incapable of deceit or disguise, humble in heart, grave in words, wise in her resolutions, she spoke seldom and little, read assiduously, and placed her confidence not in inconstant riches but in the prayers of the poor. Being always employed with fervour, she would have no witness of her heart but God alone. She injured no one, was beneficent

to all, honoured her superiors, envied not equals, shunned vain-glory, followed reason, and ardently loved virtue. Her actions had nothing unbecoming, her gait nothing of levity, her voice nothing of overbearing assurance. Her exterior was so well regulated that in her body was seen a picture of her mind. Her charities knew no bounds, temperate in her diet she prolonged her fasts several days, and the most ordinary meats were her choice, not to please the taste but to sustain nature. It was not her custom to go out of doors except to the house of prayer, and this always in the company of relatives."

What a model for young girlhood was Mary, and what a testimony to a good mother's care and example. Of that mother, Saint Jerome says: "Anne is the glorious tree from which bloomed a twig under Divine Influence. She is the consecrated ground which brought forth the Burning Bush. She is the sublime Heaven from whose heights the Star of the Sea neared its rising. She is the blessed barren woman, happy mother among mothers, from her pure womb came forth the shining temple of God, the sanctuary of the Holy Ghost, the Mother of God."

Mary is the Treasurer of all graces. How great then the privilege and dignity conferred by God upon Saint Anne when God chose her for Mary's mother? "Blessed, thrice blessed, are you, Saint Anne!" exclaims Saint John Damascene, the great Doctor of the Church, "who did receive from God and bring forth the blessed Child from whence proceeded Christ, the Flower of Life." Even her beautiful name Anne (grace) signifies gracious, loving, and refers to her sublime destiny. She too had been selected from all eternity like her beloved child. To her may be applied the words of Saint Bernardine of Siena regarding Saint Joseph:

"In the Kingdom of God the universal rule is 'If God elects anyone for a special privilege and a sublime state, He bestows on that chosen person all the gifts necessary for its adornment'."

"Anne was the most chaste of virgins," wrote (Venerable) Mary of Agreda in the 'City of God.' "From her very childhood she possessed the fullness of every virtue. She was being continually enlightened, and was constantly engaged in devout meditation. Her unceasing prayer was that the Redeemer might come quickly. Had Anne not been adorned with angelic purity she could never have become the mother of the Virgin of Virgins. Without purity the great miracle of Mary's Immaculate Conception could never have taken place in her womb."

Blessed Anne Catherine Emmerich in her visions saw Saint Anne in ecstasy, enveloped in heavenly splendour, and surrounded by hosts of angels at the moment of Mary's Immaculate Conception. She beheld the Heavens open, and the Blessed Trinity and angels rejoicing. Equally great was the Heavenly jubilation at Mary's birth. Saint Anne shares in the glory of Mary in a special manner on the great feasts of the Immaculate Conception and Nativity, they are her feasts also, on which her clients should rejoice with her.

Saint Anne's Life on Earth

All that we know about Saint Anne has been derived from what is called "Apocryphal" literature. There were certain writings of the apostles and other holy people of the early ages of the church, which though not accepted as the inspired Word of God, were yet regarded with respect and veneration, and as of historical importance. They related many details about Our Lord's family connections, which are not to be found in the Gospels. These writings were called

"Apocryphal." One of them is called the "Proto-Gospel of Saint James" and it tells us what we are here to relate regarding the parents of Our Blessed Lady. Saint Joachim was descended from the great king and prophet David, although at the time of Our Lady's birth that family had sunk into poverty and comparative obscurity. His wife Anna belonged to the tribe of Aaron, the High Priest, and brother of Moses the great law-giver. The tribe of Aaron had always been set apart for the priestly office. Thus, both parents of Our Lady were of the very flower of the Jewish race. In purity of life and nobility of character, they far exceeded all who had preceded them. But to outward seeming, Joachim and Anna were like their neighbours. They had to work hard, because the family of David had not prospered in the worldly sense; and though they possessed a little bit of land it needed constant labour to wrest a living from it. The women of the East help their men in the fields, and so did Saint Anne help Saint Joachim. She drew water from the well at eventide when the day's work was over, she helped to grind the corn or grain which she afterwards made into bread, she made butter, and no doubt kept bees and gathered the honey, as all the peasant women did in the little town of Nazareth where she dwelt with her husband. All the garments which she and her husband wore, and all the furnishings of her little home were spun and fashioned by her own industrious hands. The "Lesson" for Saint Anne's Feast is taken from "Proverbs 31." It describes a "valiant woman" and is eminently suitable to the mother of Mary.

"Who shall find a valiant woman? From afar, and the utmost bounds is her price. The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he shall not want for spoil. She will render him good, and not evil all the days of her life. She has put out her hands to strong things, and her fingers have taken hold of the spindle. She has opened her hand to the needy, and stretched out her hands to the poor - strength and beauty

are her clothing, and she shall laugh in the latter day. She has opened her mouth to wisdom, and the law of clemency is on her tongue. She has looked well to the paths of her house, and has not eaten her bread idle. Her children have risen up and called her blessed; and her husband, he praised her. Many daughters have gathered riches, you have surpassed them all. Favour is deceitful and beauty vain. The woman that fears the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates."

Such was Anna or Anne, beloved and cherished spouse of Joachim. Surely, these two were happy! They were certainly very happy in each other, but one thing was wanting to complete their happiness to make their home a paradise. That one thing was a child. This virtuous and noble pair were childless. In most cases the lack of offspring is disappointing to a good, happily-wedded couple, but under the Jewish dispensation it was more than disappointing, it was a tragedy - a disgrace. Sterility was considered by the Jews to be a judgment of God on the woman for some sin. Motherhood was a sign of God's blessing on the righteous, and Jewish women longed for children because each one hoped that the expected and promised Redeemer, the Messiah - would come of her family. For a childless woman there could be no such hope. In such a case, it was even permitted to her husband to put her away. Joachim and Anna had been wedded for over twenty years. All that time they had prayed that God might bestow offspring upon them, but in vain. They beheld themselves growing old. Humanly speaking there was no hope that Anna would become a mother, but Joachim never thought of deserting her. Rather, he loved her the more, and shared in her humiliation. They were both resigned to God's Will, and prayed together that the Messiah would come quickly. They did not guess that He was to be their own grandson, according to the flesh.

At length the biggest humiliation of his life came to Joachim. He was refused entrance into the temple on a feast-day. The High Priest told him that being childless his sacrifice would not be acceptable to God. But both he and his wife turned to God for comfort, and Anne promised that if the Lord took away her reproach she would dedicate her child to His service. The faith of the pious couple was rewarded by the apparition of an angel who assured them that they would have a child "whom all the world should bless." The promise was fulfilled when Anne became the mother of a daughter, Mary, known to after ages as "Blessed among women."

The devout clients of Saint Anne may learn from this brief recital to have confidence in her who lived such a perfect life, and yet experienced humiliation and disappointment for so many years. She will not be deaf to the prayers of those who are still in this Vale of Tears. And as Mary was the great gift sent to Anne to console her for all she had endured, so will she lead us also to Mary, and obtain for us the aid of her Blessed Child. On the day of her purification, Saint Anne thanked the Lord for all His mercies, and promised to bring her daughter to the temple when she should be of suitable age. This done, the pious little family returned to Nazareth. In representations of Saint Anne, we always see her with her blessed child beside her, while a book lies open upon the mother's knee. It is the book of the Holy Scriptures. According to the Fathers of the Church, Mary's reason shone forth from her earliest years, and she understood without difficulty all that her mother taught her from the inspired pages, which she soon learned to read herself. With particular reverence and love would the holy Virgin study those passages which spoke of the Redeemer to come, and in her humility she longed to be even the handmaid of the Virgin who was to bring forth the Messiah.

Did Anne guess from the angel's message to her what was to be the sublime destiny of her daughter? If so, with what reverence and love combined must she not have gazed upon that daughter's lovely face, how carefully did she not train and teach her. Dutifully and lovingly, the little Mary listened to her mother, drinking in every word, and learning to love her mother more and more as she realized that mother's virtues. How Anne must have advanced on the Way of Perfection because of this close contact with Mary, the "Mystical Rose"!

The perfect mother and still more perfect child form a beautiful and inexhaustible subject for contemplation and meditation.

At length the time arrived when Anne must fulfil her vow, and part with the treasure of her home. It was the custom of {some} pious Jewish families to have their daughters brought up within the precincts of the temple of Jerusalem, in order that they might benefit by the instructions of the High Priest, and be taught all that it is useful for young girls to know by pious women older than themselves. Joachim and Anne lived at Nazareth. They set out with their daughter to make the long journey to Jerusalem. Great artists have often taken for their theme the Presentation of the youthful Virgin in the Temple. They have painted her as they saw her in their mind's eye. We see the long flight of steps which the lovely child ascends alone. Her parents stand beneath gazing after her with longing eyes. The High Priest stands above, with hands outstretched, behind him her future companions. But no one can depict the terrible loneliness of the mother and child. Only those who have known such partings can have some faint idea of their feelings. Only the thought that they were doing God's Will sustained them. It is said that Joachim and Anne in their later days came to live in Jerusalem, in a little house near the Temple so as to be

near their daughter Mary. What a consolation it must have been to their declining years to behold her each day increasing in grace and beauty. There is a lovely picture of the youthful Virgin in the Temple, which is venerated under the title of "Mater Admirabilis" (Mother most Admirable). This painting hangs in an oratory in the Sacred Heart Convent of the Trinita dei Monti in Rome. Many wonderful favours have been granted to those who have prayed before it. These, and the interesting history attached to the picture and its title would seem to indicate that Our Lady wishes us to recall those early days in the Temple when she prayed and worked and meditated and prepared herself without knowing it, for the great dignity awaiting her.

Saint Anne often visited Mary in the Temple, and the good pious daughter often went to help and comfort the parents who were growing old and feeble. Joachim died first, in the arms of the faithful wife whom he had so loved and cherished through all the vicissitudes of life, and in the presence of the daughter who was to be the Mother of God. Only the death of Saint Joseph could be more blessed than that of Joachim. As he gazed into the face of his pure and lovely daughter, did God reveal the great secret to his soul? Did he and Anne read the unspoken thought in one another's eyes? We do not know. The old man blessed his wife and daughter, and gave up his soul in peace.

Anna did not long survive him. The best traditions tell us that she did not live to behold Our Saviour. It is supposed that she died in Jerusalem some months after the death of Joachim. We can picture to ourselves the beautiful death of Saint Anne. She had been a holy and valiant woman all her days. In the last years of her life, in the intimate companionship of Mary she had arrived at the most sublime heights of prayer and contemplation. Mary prayed beside her dying bed, soothed her anguish, wiped the sweat of

death from her brow. What a union of hearts there was between this mother and child. Who can better help us to draw near to Mary than her mother Saint Anne? The good mother breathed her last sigh, and died, blessing Mary with her last breath, while the tears of the loving daughter rained down upon her face. Surely, Saint Anne must be the Patroness as Saint Joseph is the Patron of a happy death. Those who have to grieve for a loving mother should seek consolation from the Blessed Virgin, reminding her of the sorrow and loneliness she felt at the death of Saint Anne. Mothers who have reason to fear lest they should be called away from their children while these are yet of tender age, should invoke in a special manner the protection of Saint Anne, and implore her, and her Virgin Daughter to protect their little ones.

We may be sure that Saint Anne took care to provide faithful and prudent guardians for her child before leaving this world. The little house at Nazareth where Mary had been born was left to her as a patrimony, and there, a few years later the Angel Gabriel announced to her that she was to be the Mother of God.

Veneration of Saint Anne

The body of Saint Anne was buried outside the gates of Jerusalem. There, in the first days of her bereavement we can imagine Mary going to weep beside the tomb, before she retired to her little home at Nazareth. There, in after years she would have come, accompanied by Joseph, and later by Jesus Himself, when they came to visit the Temple. Later still, widowed and childless, she would linger beside her mother's grave after she had revisited the scenes of her Son's Passion. We may suppose then that the tomb of Saint Anne was an object of great veneration to all the disciples of Our Lord. They would have been horrified at the idea that

those sacred remains should be desecrated by profane hands. Yet they knew, because of Our Lord's prophecy that the destruction of Jerusalem was at hand. Lazarus, Martha and Mary and some others determined to leave the doomed city before the judgment of God fell upon it, but they would not leave the body of Our Lady's mother to be profaned by the brutal soldiery of Titus. They carried it away with them, over the seas. They landed in the south of France, and tradition relates that they buried Saint Anne's body in a cave at a place called Apt in Provence, in the south of France. Later on, a church was built over the spot, but owing to wars and religious persecutions the faithful were so harassed that they could not practise their devotions there, so it fell into decay, and even the place of Saint Anne's sepulture was forgotten. When peace returned to France and Catholics could breathe once more, a magnificent church was erected on the site of the old one, but the cave or crypt where the holy remains lay could not be found. During the consecration of the new church however, in the eighth century, God chose, by a wonderful miracle, to disclose the resting-place of the grandmother of Jesus Christ, according to the flesh.

At the most solemn part of the ceremonies a boy of fourteen, who was among the congregation, was noticed as becoming very excited. He was blind, deaf and dumb, and usually quiet and impassive. What was the surprise of everybody when he suddenly rose from his seat, walked up to the altar steps, and struck his stick several times upon one of them. His friends and others thinking he had suddenly gone mad tried to remove him, but in vain. He became still more violently excited, and kept on striking on the same spot. The Emperor Charlemagne was present in the church, and all eyes were turned upon him seeking advice or orders as to what to do. He, doubtless inspired by God, gave orders that workmen were to be summoned to remove the steps. This

was done, and a subterraneous passage was discovered. The afflicted boy jumped into it, followed by the Emperor, and made signs that they were to break down a wall which impeded their progress. This was done, and at the end of a long narrow corridor, another crypt was discovered, and, in front of a walled recess they saw a lamp burning, which sent forth an unearthly radiance. At that moment, the light went out, while at the same moment the afflicted boy was given to see, to hear and to speak. He called out "It is she." Charlemagne echoed his words, and the cry was taken up by the crowds who sank on their knees, overcome by emotion.

In the casket, when dug out, they found a winding sheet, enclosing the relics, and bearing the inscription: "Here lies the body of Saint Anne, mother of the glorious Virgin Mary." The winding sheet was found to be of Eastern design and texture, such as would be likely to be used in the Holy Land. Charlemagne, after venerating the sacred remains of Saint Anne, thus unexpectedly and miraculously brought to light had an exact narrative of the occurrence drawn up by a Notary, and a copy of the same sent to the Pope with a letter from the Emperor. These documents and the Pope's reply are still extant.

The cathedral built over the crypt holding the remains of Saint Anne is dedicated to Saint Auspice, the bishop who received the saint's body from the disciples, and who interred it in this place, deep in the earth to save it from profane hands. From the time of the abovementioned discovery, this cathedral at Apt became the goal of devout pilgrims from all parts of France and Europe, who flocked thither to pay their homage to the blessed "grandmother" of Jesus Christ. The clergy and people of Apt, fully alive to the importance of the charge committed to them by God, have carefully guarded Saint Anne's relics all down the centuries, and, though some of them have been bestowed upon

various churches, et cetera, the major portion of those relics still repose at Apt. Pilgrims to Saint Anne's shrine in the venerable cathedral will find piles of ex-votos, (offerings made after a cure and in fulfillment of a vow,) which testify to the gratitude of other pilgrims helped by good Saint Anne during the past eleven hundred years and more. Many devout clients of Our Lady and Saint Anne who visit Lourdes and Saint Anne d'Auray (more of this, soon) will be surprised to learn that, not so very far away from Lourdes rests the body of Our Lady's own beloved mother.

What historical associations cluster around this shrine at Apt! Charlemagne bowed low before it, kings and queens have prayed there since his time. Crusaders have knelt there to invoke Saint Anne's blessing upon their pious undertaking. Men and women prominent in the history of Europe during the Middle Ages left rich offerings at the feet of Our Lady's mother. The great King of France, Louis XIV, was a gift from Saint Anne to his mother, Queen Anne of Austria. Like Saint Anne herself, this queen, wife of Louis XIII, had arrived at an advanced age without bearing a child to be heir to France. She invoked Saint Anne, sending chosen messengers to Apt to pray there. The birth of a son and heir was the extraordinary favour granted to her in return. The queen's intense gratitude added a side-chapel to the Sanctuary, and thither the body of the saint was removed.

Many valuable gifts presented by Anne of Austria and other wealthy clients of the saint vanished during the stormy period of the French Revolution; fortunately the sacred relics remained untouched. Papal Bulls have over and over again asserted the genuineness of Saint Anne's relics at Apt, and so keen became the demand for them that at length they could only be obtained by permission of the king. An arm of the saint is enshrined in the basilica of Saint Paul's outside

the Walls, Rome; her right hand is venerated in the church of Saint Anne in Vienna. Countless cures and conversions have taken place at Apt, the first, if not the most famous shrine of Saint Anne.

Saint Anne d'Auray

Less ancient than Apt, but even better known and more popular is the Sanctuary of Saint Anne d'Auray in Brittany, chosen by the Mother of Mary herself as a place where she wished to be specially honoured. It was to a Breton peasant that she made her desire known in a series of wonderful visions. The Bretons were always remarkable for their intense devotion to Saint Anne, whom they regard as their Protectress and Patroness, and whom they address with tender familiarity as their "bonne-mere," the Breton child's term of endearment for its grandmother. The saint showed her appreciation of this attitude in a striking manner a little over three hundred years ago in 1623 and 1624. She appeared several times to a humble peasant, named Yves Nicolazic, who lived outside the small village of Keranna (named in honour of Saint Anne). There was nothing remarkable about this man. He had reached his fortieth year, and was just a sincere pious Catholic, going regularly to the sacraments, and constantly to be seen with his Rosary beads in his hands. Like every Breton, he was devoted to Saint Anne, speaking of her always as his "good mistress." One pious habit he especially had, which doubtless was particularly pleasing to his holy Patroness. He was accustomed to visit frequently and to pray upon a certain piece of ground where tradition said that an ancient chapel of Saint Anne had stood. Perhaps as he prayed there he longed that Holy Mass would be celebrated there once more in honour of Our Lady's mother. His simple pious neighbours neither wondered nor laughed at Yves. He seems to have been generally respected, but taken very much for granted,

until Saint Anne picked him out as the person best fitted to accomplish her design of restoring her chapel at Keranna.

One night, in August 1623, he saw in his room a hand holding a lighted wax torch. He was naturally startled, even frightened by this strange experience. It was repeated several times in his own field, called the "Bocenno" where the ancient chapel had stood. There was one part of this field which could never be ploughed, the oxen always refusing to pass over it. The mysterious torch-bearing hand hovered over this spot in particular, and it was seen by many of the villagers besides Nicolazic himself. Saint Anne evidently thought that the poor peasant's mind needed to be very gently and gradually prepared for his mission. At length she appeared to him in the form of a stately and venerable lady, clad in a snow-white robe, with the now familiar torch in her right hand and a luminous cloud beneath her feet. This happened one evening when he and his brother were driving home their cows, and the men were first made aware of a supernatural presence by the unaccountable behaviour of the beasts, which suddenly stood motionless, and could not be persuaded to stir. Nicolazic and his brother-in-law who saw the vision together fled from it in terror. They regretted their cowardice presently, and returned, but the lady had disappeared.

She came again soon, and after that often appeared to Nicolazic. At last, she spoke to him, and bade him tell his parish priest that she wished her chapel to be rebuilt on the spot in the Bocenno field where she had been honoured long ago. He obeyed very unwillingly, but met with a decided rebuff. The Rector (or parish priest) would scarcely listen to him. The Catholic clergy so far from encouraging superstition as Protestants accuse them of doing, always take a severely critical view of alleged supernatural occurrences, realizing the harm that may be done in a

community by one impostor or visionary, and the weakening of faith in the miraculous that may follow on exposure of fraud or insanity. But the Rector and Curate of Keranna carried this commendable caution to excess. Even when an ancient statue of Saint Anne was discovered in the Bocenno field, under the guidance of the heavenly vision, they remained incredulous, and treated Nicolazic with harshness and contempt. In punishment of their obstinacy, they were both afflicted with illness. The Rector on being cured through the intercession of Saint Anne at once ceased his opposition to Nicolazic, did all in his power to hasten the erection of the chapel, and laboured during the rest of his life to spread devotion to the saint who had so generously forgiven his disobedience. The Curate also repented, but continued to suffer until his death a few years later.

The news of the miraculous finding of the statue spread like wildfire through the country. Pilgrims came in crowds to Keranna, which gradually dropped that name, and became known as Saint Anne d'Auray. Subscriptions poured in, and the chapel was speedily erected. Saint Anne had repeatedly told Nicolazic that Keranna would become the most famous of her shrines, and one of the most renowned places of pilgrimage in the world. He lived to see the fulfilment of this prophecy of his "good mistress." To avoid publicity he retired from Keranna to Pluneret. He received no extraordinary favours himself from Saint Anne, except the gift, after fifteen years of married life of two children, a son and a daughter. Nor was he again favoured by a vision of Saint Anne until a short time before his death, which occurred in 1645, at the age of sixty-three. The Bretons have always venerated him as a saint but it is only recently that his Cause has been introduced at Rome.

Countless miracles have been wrought and extraordinary conversions have taken place during three centuries or so at

the shrine of Saint Anne d'Auray, and the pilgrimages thereto never ceased even during the terrors of the French Revolution. Nothing could stamp out the devotion in Brittany, and it is safe to prophesy that it will last as long as the Breton race. A glorious cathedral now replaces the old church in the Bocenno field, and hundreds of thousands of pilgrims visit it each year.

Saint Anne Beaupre

In addition to Apt and Auray there is yet a third famous Sanctuary dedicated to Saint Anne, that of Beaupré in Canada. The first French settlers in that part of the American continent were chiefly Bretons, and they did not leave their love of Saint Anne behind them in their home country. According to the legendary account of the origin of Beaupré, some Breton sailors when caught in a storm on the Saint Lawrence river besought, as of custom the aid of their Patroness good Saint Anne, and promised, if rescued, to build a chapel in her honour wherever they should land. When after a night of misery they reached in safety the north bank of the river at Beaupré they did not forget their vow. In haste, they erected a little wooden chapel, which was soon enlarged by the generosity of an old mariner resident in Beaupré. From that time, about the middle of the seventeenth century, the usual wonders associated with the devotion to Saint Anne started, and drew the attention of the people of Canada to the spot.

The first little chapel had expanded by 1876 into a great basilica, of which the Redemptorist Fathers took charge. It was unfortunately destroyed by fire in 1922. The statue and relics of Saint Anne were untouched by the flames, and the speedy restoration of the church was set on foot immediately, owing to the fervour of the French Canadians. Rome sent to this shrine at the end of the nineteenth

century the wrist bone of Saint Anne, now venerated as the great Relic of Beaupré. The Church of Saint Jean Baptiste in New York contains a portion of the saint's forearm, bestowed by Pope Leo XIII. The pilgrimages to Beaupré increase year by year. Devotion to Saint Anne, wherever planted, strikes its roots deeply, and spreads with astonishing rapidity. This is not surprising when we consider how abundantly Saint Anne showers favours on those who have recourse to her. No other saint seems to have more influence at the Court of Heaven than the Mother of the Mother of God.

Devotion to Saint Anne in Ireland

The Cult of Saint Anne was introduced into England by the Normans, and at a later date, these brought it with them to Ireland. In the Middle Ages, devotion to Saint Anne was practised to a degree of which we have no conception nowadays. Her feast was a Holy Day of obligation in England and Ireland, and in both countries innumerable churches were built in her honour, foundations were made under her patronage, and guilds dedicated to her. Devotion to her was closely associated with devotion to the Blessed Virgin, and to her Immaculate Conception. In England of course all this ceased at the "Reformation." Veneration of both Mother and Daughter died out at the same time there and cannot revive until the day when England becomes once more a Catholic nation. Saint Anne stands always near her daughter, and we may hope that her prayers will avail to bring back to Our Lady the country once known as the "Dowry of Mary." In our own country of Ireland, devotion to Saint Anne never died out as it did in England, but, though it has revived of recent years, it is not as great as it was long ago. Her feast was observed as a Holy Day of obligation long ago in Ireland and the most important of the Dublin guilds was that of Saint Anne, which had its chantry chapel in the Church of Saint Audoen, High Street. The present church of the same name

in the same street stands close to the site of the ancient chapel of Saint Anne which was founded and endowed in 1430 by Henry VI. The guild connected with it supported six priests, who celebrated Masses for the souls of the founders at altars dedicated to Our Lady, Saint Anne and other saints. The guild held property worth about a thousand pounds a year, which was afterwards iniquitously seized and devoted to Protestant purposes, instead of to the Catholic charities for which it was intended by the pious donors. A fresco or wall painting, having Saint Anne for its subject was discovered in old Saint Audoen's some years ago, on the wall of the chapel of Saint Anne.

If our faith had not been driven underground by cruel and prolonged persecution and penal enactments we might have shrines and great pilgrimages in honour of Saint Anne equal to those of Apt, Auray, or Beaupré. For centuries, all open expression of our religious life was denied to us. Our forefathers held on heroically to essentials, the Mass, the Sacraments and - where these could not be had - the Rosary. They cherished the roots of Catholicity, but, until recently, no flowers could be permitted to appear. Now, however, there are welcome signs of expansion in various directions. A notable revival has begun of the ancient devotion to Saint Anne, its centre being, as is fitting the modern church of Saint Audoen, so close to the site on which Saint Anne was formerly so honoured. The beautiful shrine of Saint Anne in Saint Audoen's Church draws immense numbers of the faithful to the feet of the saint, especially on her feast-day, and on Tuesdays. The custom of venerating Saint Anne in a special manner on Tuesdays is of very ancient date.

If devotion to Saint Anne's shrine in new Saint Audoen's shadows forth an Irish Saint Anne d'Auray on that spot, so close to her ancient chapel, so surely does the exquisite gem of architectural beauty in the picturesque vale of

Shanganagh promise to become the Irish "Beaupré." Already does the "grandmother" of Christ draw her votaries in numbers to this chaste and beautiful edifice, dedicated to her, and where her picture with her beloved Daughter beside her, hangs above the altar.

The foundation-stone of the Church of Saint Anne at Shankill was laid by His Grace, Most Rev. Dr. Byrne, Archbishop of Dublin, July 26th, 1931, and the blessing and opening of this new Sanctuary of Saint Anne took place on July 30th, 1933, the Archbishop again officiating. The materials used in its construction are all Irish, as is its workmanship. When completed it will be indeed a glorious sanctuary. The following appreciation of the new church is taken from the "Irish Independent" of August 5th, 1933: "From the 'Shan-Kill' (old church) to Saint Anne's lovely sanctuary is a matter of 1400 years. How the hermit Dolgan of Carraig Dolgan (vulgarly known as Katty Gallagher) and the sainted dead of 'ould Rathmichil' must have rejoiced on last Sunday at the sight of the immediate though remote successor to their own church!

"Among the great concourse of people attending the opening of the church the fine body of Foresters forming the bodyguard of the Archbishop recalled the fact that hundreds of years ago a similar company of Foresters guarded the forests of the Archbishop of Dublin from Glencree to Tallaght. In their picturesque uniforms, and with their reverential demeanour, they gave evidence of the faith and piety of old Dublin, so fostered for centuries by the Guild of Saint Anne.

"The vale of Shanganagh rich in beauty and story lends itself to, and requires its church to be, a thing of beauty.

"Saint Anne's Church is an ornament, a gem set in a rich cluster. Its architects have never set a brighter gem in

emerald green.

"The unique site called to their artistic sense for an exceptional facade, they have given one reminiscent of the Rock of Cashel.

"But is all the glory of the King's House from without? By no means. Without being too critical, one may say that little attention has been paid in the past to the interior by Irish church builders. But it is not so in this case. Father Sherwin has impressed his mind and his taste on the Church of Saint Anne. The interior - what a revelation it is! Unexpected, because of the rich exterior, yet all the more welcome. One can gaze, and return to gaze - which is a proof that it grips and retains one's interest. Everyone who enters wishes to re-enter to obtain a new view, a new idea. It is full of ideas, new colours, new forms, new perspective. What a glorious sanctuary when it will be complete! The only regret is that it is incomplete. Let us hope Father Sherwin will soon be able to finish this lovely work. All should be proud to lend a hand.

"Let us view it as it is.

"The most striking feature of the building as such, is the artistic arches and chaste columns separating nave and aisle. Here the colour note of the church is struck, the lovely blue of the polished columns blending with the subdued white. That note is carried aloft and expanded in the exquisite windows, reminding one of fleecy cloud in azure sky.

"A bold but very happy thought introduced the Congress Cross to crown the graceful design.

"The furnishings, especially of the altar are chosen with the same regard to chaste designs and artistic execution. The sanctuary lamp, a replica of the Ardagh Chalice, with

pendant ring, after the Tara Brooch, the candlesticks and candelabra in form and workmanship of rare beauty, and the rich golden door of the Tabernacle, with its "Cross of Cong" and precious stones. The worshipper is enabled to gaze on the resting place of the King of Kings without being blinded by an offending chancel window. Many other details are well worthy of admiration. In fundamentals and in artistry Saint Anne's Sanctuary at Shankill is a model."

Saint Anne, Patroness of Christian Mothers

Saint Anne obtains many graces, priceless graces for those who invoke her, but she grants her maternal assistance in particular to Christian mothers. She preserves peace in married life, restores harmony in discord, and wonderfully changes a husband's bad disposition. She protects the birth of children in an extraordinary manner, bestows blessings that lighten the task of rearing children properly, brings wayward children back upon the right path, obtains restoration of health for the sick mother, preserves her precious life for the helpless children and prevents the loss of husband and father. Once when Saint Bridget (Footnote - Saint Bridget of Sweden, who was married, and had a large family.) was praying, Saint Anne, to whom she had a special devotion, appeared to her, and said, "Behold me, my daughter Bridget. I am Anne, whom you love. Know how full of mercy, goodness and affection I am for all who love me. Those who live chastely and peacefully in the state of matrimony, I will love and protect in a special manner, I will grant their petitions whenever they take refuge in me."

How necessary, especially in these days, is Saint Anne's assistance for mothers in bringing up their children. That great saint obtains the grace for mothers to look upon their children as God's greatest blessing, and to spare no pains to train them, from their infancy in the love of God. How

beautiful it is to see a mother training the baby lips of her child to utter the Sacred Names, and training the tiny hands to form the Sign of the Cross. We see Anne teaching her daughter the sacred truths of religion, and so also should every mother train her child to read and love pious books. Children, too, should meditate upon the example given them by the youthful Virgin, as she stands at her mother's side, hanging upon each word uttered by the beloved parent. If a picture of Saint Anne with the Holy Virgin beside her were hung in every living-room in Ireland what an incentive and reminder it would be to mothers and daughters so to behave that no word or act of theirs would be unworthy of the presence of Mary and Anne. If it is good mothers who often implant the germs of future saints, it is, alas! equally true that many souls are lost through the indifference, neglect and conduct of bad mothers.

A French physician who had witnessed the death of more than two thousand mothers once remarked, "I have always found a Christian mother's death to be most beautiful and edifying."

The following example is one of many instances which show us the happiness of a Christian mother's death-bed.

In the forties of the last century, (the nineteenth,) a Christian mother lay dying in a village of the Black Forest in Baden. Seven of her children had pre-deceased her. Suddenly she raised herself, and with a cry of joy, exclaimed "O, my little children!"

"What do you see?" inquired the priest who was beside her.

"All my seven children are there," was the reply, as she sank back upon the pillow, and went to join her dear ones.

Saint Anne, Patroness of All Christians

In the glorious ages of Faith, the Middle Ages, Saint Anne was fondly called "Comfortress of the Sorrowing, Mother of the Poor, Health of the Sick, Protectress of Widows, Patron of the Labourer, Patroness of the Childless, Help of expectant Mothers."

Saint Anne was spared neither trials nor humiliations, for years she suffered, and therefore understands how to comfort the sorrowful.

Saint Anne loved the poor, and she and her husband bestowed a third of their property on them. Saint Anne continues her charity in Heaven. She helps the poor often in a wonderful manner, and she helps the dying, who are poorest of all.

The number of cures wrought by Saint Anne's intercession is countless, and she has been the Health of the Sick for centuries, and is still the same loving mother.

Saint Anne was long childless, and often obtains the gift of children for those who invoke her, if such be the Will of God.

She also guards mothers in their hour of danger, and obtains the favour from God that their children may not lose the grace of holy baptism.

She helps those who toil for their daily bread, as she was a toiler herself. In a word there is no limit to the beneficent activity of good Saint Anne in Heaven, as all her clients have good reason to know, and having helped us during life, she will not forget us at the hour of our death, as the following experience related by a priest will testify:-

"It happened when I was assistant pastor in the parish of N--. One night I was aroused by the ringing of the door-bell. A strange stately lady called up to me. 'Father,

please go quickly, and take the Blessed Sacrament to a servant in a house up on the hill, for she will not live through the night. The sexton is awaiting you in the church.' The sexton had been awakened by the same person. I took the Blessed Sacrament, and we started for the house to which the lady had directed me. To our surprise, we found the house locked, and when we knocked were informed that there was no one ill there. We concluded that some worthless person had deceived us. In order that I would not need to return with the Blessed Sacrament, one of the servants declared her readiness to go to Confession and to receive Holy Communion. Her pious offer was willingly accepted. During her Confession, the servant experienced a slight indisposition. She finished her Confession and received Holy Communion. Before long, she began to feel worse, and was obliged to take to her bed. Shortly after, it was evident that her end was approaching. I administered Extreme Unction, and imparted the Indulgence for the dying. Scarcely was this done when she died. Above her bed hung pictures of many saints, among which was a large decorated representation of Saint Anne. The inmates of the house informed me that the pious servant had practised special devotion to Saint Anne, and in her honour abstained from milk every Tuesday.

"I have no doubt that the woman who called the sexton and me, was Saint Anne herself, as she desired to obtain for her client this last great favour. Without the good saint's gracious intervention this would not have been possible."

Let this example move us to practise special devotion to Saint Anne to obtain a happy death, on which depends our eternity.

Bethlehem - Simeon and Anna

But our seventh type of devotion to the Sacred Infancy brings us to a very different picture. The world of the Church is itself a hidden world; but even within it there is another world still more deeply hidden. It is the very cloister of the Holy Ghost, though without any show of cloister, a world of humblest peace, of shyest love, and of most secret communion with God. It gives us much to think of, but little to say. There is little to describe in its variety, but much in its heavenly union to feed the repose of prayer. The



gorgeous apparition of the Kings in the gloomy Cave has passed away. The Babe too has left the Cave. Our present picture is the same humble mystery of Bethlehem which is now enacted on a gorgeous scene. We must pass to the glorious courts of the magnificent temple, when its little unknown Master has come to take possession, the true High Priest, with a thicker veil of incredible humiliation round Him than that which shrouded the local Holy of Holies from the gazing multitude. It is the mystery of Mary's jubilee, the Presentation of Our Lord mingling with that true-hearted deceit of humility, her needless Purification. The Babe's new worshippers are Simeon and Anna, who so resemble each other amidst their differences that we may regard them as forming one type of worship. Anna was a widow of the tribe of Aser, who filled no place in the public eye, but in whom her little circle of friends had recognized and revered the spirit of prophecy from time to time. She thus had an obscure sphere of influence of her own. She was a figure

familiar to the eyes of many in Jerusalem, whose piety led them to the morning sacrifices in the temple. Bowed down with the weight of fourscore years and four, her own house was not her home, even if she had a house she could call her own. The temple was her home. It was rarely that she left its hallowed precincts. She performed in her single self the offices of a whole religious community; for she carried on the unbroken round of her adoration through the night as well as through the day. Long past the age when bodily macerations form an indispensable element in holiness, her life was nevertheless a continual fast. Prayer was the work of her life, and penance its recreation. Herod, most likely, had never heard of her, but she was dear to God, and was known honorably to His servants: God has widows like her in all Christian cities.

Simeon also was worn out with age and watching. He had placed himself on the battlements of Sion, and, while his eyes were filled with the sweet tears of prayer, he was ever looking out for Messias that was to come. Good people knew him well, and they said of him that he was a just man. Even and fair, striving for nothing, claiming no privileges, ready to give way, most careful to be prompt and full and considerate and timely in all his dealings with others, giving no ground for complaint to anyone, modest and self-possessed, attentive yet unobtrusive, such was the character he bore among those of his religious fellow-citizens to whom he was known. But to the edification of his justice he added the beautiful and captivating example of the tenderest piety. Devotion was the very life of his soul. The gift of piety reigned in his heart. Like many holy persons, he had set his affections on what seemed like an earthly beatific vision. He must see the Lord's Christ before he dies.

There is a look of something obstinate and fanciful in his devotion: it is in reality a height of holiness. He has cast his

spiritual life in one mould; it was a life of desire, a life of watching, a life of long-delayed but never despondent waiting for the consolation of Israel. There is a humble pertinacity about his prayer, which is to bend God's will to his own. It was a mighty fire of love which burned in his simple heart, and the Holy Ghost loved to dwell among its guileless flames. It was revealed to him that his obstinate waiting had been a dear worship to God, that he should have his will, and that he should see with his aged eyes the beauty of the Lord's Christ, before he was called away from earth. He therefore was a haunter of the temple; for where should he be more likely to meet the Christ than there? How God always gives more than He promises! Simeon did not only see the Christ, but was allowed to take Him up in his arms, and doubtless to plant a kiss of trembling reverence upon the Creator's human lips. How else could his lips have ever sung so beautiful a song, a song so sunset-like that one might believe all the beauty of all earth's beautiful evenings since creation had gone into it, to fill it full of peaceful spells? He was old for a poet; but his age has not dried or drained his heart.

The infirm old man held bravely in his arms the strength of the Omnipotent. He held up the Light of the world on high in the midst of His own temple, just before he himself was lost in the inaccessible light of a glorious eternity. His weak eyes, misty with age and dim, with tears, looked into the deep eyes of the Babe of Bethlehem, and to his faith they were fountains of eternal light. This was the vision that he had been seeing all his life long. He had wept over the drooping fortunes of Israel, but much more over the shepherdless wanderings of the souls of his dear countrymen. But he had ever seen through his tears, as we may see through a thick storm of rain, waving like a ponderous curtain to and fro, while the wind is slowly undrawing it, a green mountain, bright and sun-stricken, with patches of illuminated yellow

corn upon its sides, and strips of green, ferny moorland, and jutting knolls of purple heather, and the wet silvery shimmering on the roofs of men's dwellings.

Now the evenings of life was come. The rain was passed away, and the Lord's mountain came out, not bright and radiant only, but so astonishingly near that he might have thought his eyes were but deceiving him. But no! the face of Jesus was close to his. Heaven had come to him on earth. It was the heaven of his own choosing. Strange lover of his land and people! he had preferred to see Jesus on earth, and so be sure that now poor Israel might possess Him, rather than have gone long since by an earlier death to have seen the Word through the quiet dimness of Abraham's bosom. Was it not the loveliest of mysteries to see those arms, that were shaking and unsteady with long lapse of time, so fondly enfolding the ever-young eternity of God? Was it not enough for Simeon? Oh, was it not unspeakably more than enough? As nightingales are said to have sung themselves to death, so Simeon died, not of the sweet weariness of his long watching, but of the fullness of his contentment, of the satisfaction of his desires, of the very new youth of soul which the touch of the Eternal Child had infused into his age; and breaking forth into music which heaven itself might envy and could not surpass, he died with his world-soothing song upon his lips.

There is a little world of such souls as Simeon and Anna within the Church. But it lies deep down, and its inmates are seldom brought to the light, even by the honors of canonization. It is a subterranean world, the diamond-mine of the Church, from whose caverns a stone of wondrous lustre is taken now and then to feed our faith, to reveal to us the abundant though hidden operations of grace, and to comfort us, when the world's wickedness and our own depress us, by showing that God has pastures of His own

under our very feet, where His glory feeds without our seeing it. So that, as sight goes for little in the world of faith, in nothing does it go for less than in the seeming evil of the world. Everywhere evil is undermined by good. It is only that good is undermost; and this is one of the supernatural conditions of God's presence. As much evil as we see, so much good or more do we know assuredly lies under it, which, if not equal to the evil in extent, is far greater in weight, and power, and worth, and substance. Evil makes more show, and thus has a look of victory, while good is daily outwitting evil by simulating defeat. We must never think of the Church, without allowing largely for the extent of obscure piety, the sphere of hidden souls. We can form no intellectual judgment of the abundance of grace, of the number of the saved, or of the inward beauty of individual souls, which even intellectually is worth anything, unless we form our estimate in the light of prayer. Charity is the truest truth; and the judgments of charity are large. The light of our own unsanctified judgment is at best but as moonlight in the world of faith, strangely distorting, grotesquely disfiguring everything. The light of prayer is as the beam of steadfast day. Who does not know how sunshine positively peoples mountain-side and wood; how, as it rests, it builds homes we could dwell in, so our fancy deems, in the rifted crags or under the leafy shades; how, wherever it has touched, it has located a beauty, and has left it when it passes on? So is it with the light of prayer, when it plays upon this difficult questionable world around us. It alone lights up for us continually this incessant heaven upon earth, this precious region of obscure souls, in which God is always served as if it were one of the angelic choirs. Who does not remember when a supernatural principle first unveiled itself before him, and showed that it was a thing of God? It was some one moment in a dawn of prayer, which was like day's first inroad upon night. So will it be with us to the end. Faith has a sort of vision of its own; but there is no

light in which it can distinguish objects, except the light of prayer.

We must always, therefore, keep our eye fixed on this obscure world of holy hidden souls, that private unsuspected stronghold of God's glory upon earth, where so much of His treasure is laid up. Simeon and Anna are disclosures to us of that hidden world. They have a place, an office, and a power in the life of the Church, which is not the less indispensable because it is also indefinable. The Father's glory would not have been adequately represented at the court of the Infant Jesus, if this obscure region had not sent thither its embassy of lowly beauty and of venerable grace.

Much of our most intimate acquaintance with the adorable character of God arises from our observations of this hidden world. It is the richest of all worlds in its contributions to the science of divine things. If we may venture so to speak, God is less upon His guard against our observations there than elsewhere. He affects secrecy the less Himself, because the particular world in which He is working is itself so secret. He is content with the twilight round Him, without pitching His well-known tent of darkness each time He vouchsafes to camp. In the case of the Shepherds we saw how they came up out of darkness, stood for a moment in the splendor of Bethlehem, and then passed on into the dark again. Here we see, with Simeon and Anna, what a long preparation God makes in the soul for what appears to be only a momentary manifestation. It shows of what deep import a brief transient mystery is, when a novitiate of perhaps fourscore years is barely long enough to fit those for their part in it, who are after all but accessories and incidents. If it be true to say that with God all ends are only means, because He is Himself the only veritable end, so also is it true in a sense that all means with Him are ends, because He is present in those means. Thus, these long lives of preparation for one

momentary appearance on the stage of the world's drama are, when we view them supernaturally, ends themselves, and each step of grace in the long career, each link of holiness in the vast chain, is itself a most sufficient end, because it holds in itself Him who is the only end. But this is not the way men judge of history. With them it is a wandering humanity which is made to confer the importance on the actors in the world's theatre, and to confer it in proportion to the visible results between the actors and humanity. With God it is His own glory which is the hidden centre of all history, and it requires a special study, with a strong habit of faith and a steady light of prayer, to enable us to read history in His way.

But, besides this long preparation for a momentary and subordinate appearance in a divine mystery, we must observe also how God often comes to men in their old age. They have lived for that which only comes when real life seems past. What a divine meaning there is in all this! The significance of a whole life often comes uppermost only in the preparation for death. Our destiny only begins to be fulfilled, after it appears to have been worked out. Who knows what he is intended for? What we have dreamed was our mission is of all things the least likely to have been such. For missions are divine things, and therefore, generally hidden, generally unconsciously fulfilled. If there are some who seem to have done their work early, and then live on we know not why, there are far more who do their real work later on, and not a few who only do it in the act of dying. Nay, is it not almost so in natural things? Life for the most part blooms only once, and like the aloe it blooms late.

Neither must we fail to note under what circumstances it is God's habit to come to these hidden souls. The devotion of Simeon and Anna is eminently a devotion of prayer and church-frequenting. In other words, God comes to holy souls,

not so much in heroic actions, which are rather the soul's leaping upward to God, but in the performance of ordinary, habitual devotions, and the discharge of modest, unobtrusive duties, made heroic by long perseverance and inward intensity. How much matter for thought is there in all these reflections; and in divine things what is matter for thought is matter for practice also! Thus, if the angelic song was the opening of heaven before our eyes, this apparition of Simeon and Anna is the opening beneath our feet of an exquisite hidden world, a realm of subterranean angels, a secret abyss of human hearts in which God loves to hide Himself, a region of evening calmness and of twilight tranquillity, a world of rest and yet of power, heated with the whole day's sunshine and giving forth its fragrance to the cooling dews, a world, which not only teaches us much, but consoles us also, yet leaves us pensive (for does not consolation always leave us so?) casting over us a profitable spiritual shadow, like the melancholy in which a beautiful sunset so often steeps the mind, breeding more loving thoughts of others, and in ourselves a more contented lowliness.

The lake lies smooth and motionless in the quiet light of evening. The great mountains with their bosses of mottled crag protruding through the green turf, and the islets with their aerial pines, are all imaged downwards in the pellucid waters. Even the heron that has just gone to roost on the dead branch is mirrored there. The faintly rosy sky between the tops of the many-fingered firs is reflected there, as if it were fairy fret-work in the mere. But upon yon promontory of rock a little blameless boy, afraid of the extreme tranquillity, or angry with it, or to satisfy some impulsive restlessness within him, has thrown a stone into the lake, and that fairy world, that delicate creation, is instantly broken up and fled. So is it with that spiritual world of placid beauty, which we

have been contemplating in the worship of Simeon and Anna.

Patron Saints for Girls - The Life of Saint Anne, Mother of the Blessed Virgin

The name of Anne, which in Hebrew signifies "gracious," shall always be venerated amongst Christians, for it is the name of the mother of Mary. How great was Anne's glory in having given birth to her who was the mother of God! "How," exclaims Saint John Damascene, "shall we worthily praise her from whom we have received the admirable and precious fruit that has given Jesus to us ?"

Saint Anne lived at Nazareth, a town of Lower Galilee, a short distance from Mount Carmel. According to the opinion of Saint Augustine, she was of the priestly tribe. She married a just man, named Joachim, of the tribe of Juda, and of the race of David by Nathan.

Those spouses walked before God in the ways of the most perfect justice, spending their days in prayer, labor, and almsgiving; they awaited, with all the ardent faith of ancient days', the Messiah that had been announced by the prophets, the Messiah so long promised to Israel; and according to the predictions, the time in which he should appear was not far off.

Anne, having arrived at an advanced age without children, could not, like the other women of Israel, cherish a hope that the Messiah would spring from her blood; but at the moment when this great blessing seemed to escape her, the all-powerful Wisdom ordained quite the contrary. The laws of nature are reversed before the Lord's designs: Anne, sterile for twenty years, conceives miraculously, and gives birth to

her who was to bring forth the Son of God, the desired of nations, the divine Redeemer of the human race.

Thenceforth Anne could not but call herself blessed; and, in fact, was she not so? she who gave birth to her who was supereminently blessed amongst women! Ponder on the beautiful canticle of thanksgiving which she pronounced - "I will sing the praise of my God," cries the blessed mother in the transports of her joy; "I will sing the praise of my God, because He has visited me in His love, and has not left my name to opprobrium."

Twenty-four days after the birth of her child, Anne repaired to the Temple to obey a precept of the law; and, like Anne, wife of Elcana, consecrating Samuel to God, the spouse of Joachim devoted her dear Mary to the service of the Temple - Mary, that sweet flower wherewith the Lord had perfumed her old age. How much must this sacrifice have cost this tender mother! but in her gratitude she was only too happy to present to the Lord that which in His love He had bestowed on her. Three years afterwards, and when Mary's reason was shining forth brilliantly, even at that early period, Anne returned to Jerusalem to fulfil her vow. Mary being solemnly consecrated to the Lord, was left in the Temple of Jerusalem, and the pious mother went back to her home, but not without shedding tears, for upon Mary, ever since God had given her, were concentrated all the thoughts and aspirations of the pious mother.

A pious writer thus represents Saint Anne, going from time to time to Jerusalem to visit her daughter - "With what joy did this pious mother put on her travelling veil to go to the holy city!"

"Whether Joachim, on his death-bed, had entrusted the Virgin to the special protection of the priesthood, or whether

the magistrates, on whom devolved the duty of providing for orphans, had themselves selected guardians from the illustrious family of Aaron, to whom she was allied on the maternal side, or that the guardianship of children, devoted to the service of the Temple, belonged by right to the Levites, one thing is, however, certain, that after the death of the pious authors of her existence, Mary had guardians from among the sacerdotal race. If we be allowed to hazard an opinion, we should say that it is very probable that the duties of this guardianship were particularly entrusted to the pious spouse of Elizabeth, as his high reputation of virtue, together with her claim of a near relative, would point him out as peculiarly fitted for that office. The anxiety and desire which the Blessed Virgin manifested, two or three years later travelling all Judea, to present her congratulations to the mother of Saint John the Baptist, and her prolonged stay in the highlands of Hebron, would, indeed, point out that closer ties than those of mere relationship existed between them. According to the modes of observance strictly adopted among the Hebrews, the roof under which Mary dwelt, during a visit so prolonged, must be as sacred as the paternal roof itself. Whoever the priests were on whom devolved the guardianship of the blessed daughter of Saint Anne, they strictly acquitted themselves of the obligations imposed on them; and when the Virgin had attained her fifteenth year, they thought to unite her in marriage to a spouse worthy of her. This project filled Mary with no little anxiety. Her lofty, pure, and contemplative soul had divined the Gospel, and virginity appeared to her to be the most honorable state which a woman could embrace. A very ancient author, cited by Saint Gregory of Nyssa, relates that she refused for a long time, but with a great deal of modesty, complying with the intentions of her guardians, and that she supplicated in humble tones her family to consent to the life which she was leading in the Temple - a life innocent, retired, and exempt from every tie, except the

ties of the Lord. Her request caused no little surprise among those who had the disposal of her person. That which she implored as a favor was nothing less than sterility, that is, opprobrium, a state solemnly accursed by the law of Moses; a state of celibacy she made choice of, that is, a total extinction of the name of her father, a thought little less than impious among the Jews, who considered it a dire calamity if their name should not be perpetuated in Israel. The vow of virginity, by which she bound herself to God, could not be urged by her as a plea, for such could be annulled by the mere will of her family. Woman at any epoch of her life was always considered a minor before the establishment of that immortal code which has enfranchised and placed the woman and the slave on terms of equality with him."

The young virgin had passed about nine years in the Temple, when Joachim, the patriarch of pure and simple life, slept his last sleep to go and repose for ever in Abraham's bosom.

Saint Anne followed her spouse soon afterwards to the tomb. Some pious authors have thought that at his last hour, a revelation from on high allowed the holy mother of Mary to behold the glorious destinies to which Heaven called her daughter. A celestial joy illuminated her countenance as she gazed on this glory; and it was in this state of blessedness that she bowed her head and breathed her latest sigh.

Devotion to Saint Anne in Many Lands, by Father Myles V Ronan

In Palestine

Tradition tells us that Anne and Joachim had been married twenty years and were still childless. In the eyes of the Jewish people such a condition was regarded as a kind of malediction from Heaven. It is easy then to understand the heart-burnings of this saintly couple at the unhappy result of their marriage in this respect. The pang was all the greater when they pondered that the Messiah of the world was to be born of the royal house of David from which they themselves were descended. According to the prophets the day was not far off when the Messiah should be born into the world. Was the malediction of Heaven to accompany them to the grave; were they to be deprived of the blessedness of knowing that the Messiah might one day be born of their descendant? Though the holy couple bowed their heads to the decrees of Providence, yet in prayer and penance they besought God, if it were His holy will, He might grant their pious desire.

God heard their prayer, and the child that was born to them was Mary, the Immaculate Virgin, Having consecrated her to the service of the Temple, they left their home at Nazareth and chose a residence in Jerusalem to be near her. It is not recorded whether they lived to see the Word Made Flesh of their own daughter, but artists of the Middle Ages loved to group together Anne, Mary, and Jesus. This grouping was, perhaps, more symbolic than real, representing for mediaeval Catholics the ideal Holy Family. When God called the happy parents to their Heavenly Home their bodies were laid side by side in Jerusalem in the tombs that they had purchased for themselves.

About forty years after Christ's death the prophecy He uttered about the destruction of the city of Jerusalem and of its magnificent Temple was verified. Knowing that this would come to pass, the relatives of Saint Anne, namely, Lazarus, Mary Magdalen, Martha, and the two Marys along with some disciples of Our Lord, took her body from the tomb to bring it to a place of safety.

Some centuries afterwards, to mark the devotion of the Easterns to Saint Anne, a basilica was built over the place of her tomb in Jerusalem, and no fewer than three festivals in the year were set apart in her honour. The first of these was the 9th of September (the day after the "Nativity of the B.V.M.") when her husband, Saint Joachim, was also honoured; the second on the 9th of December, whereon the Easterns, a day later than the Latins, keep the feast of the Immaculate Conception; and the third on the 25th of July, the feast of the "Precious Death (or Sleeping) of Saint Anne, Mother of the Most Holy Mother of God."

Saint Anne d'Apt

The flight of the relatives of Saint Anne, with her body, must have been taken in haste, as the frail boat in which they embarked was rudderless. After many anxious days and nights, tossed on the turbulent waters of the Mediterranean, their boat came to rest in the ancient seaport of Marseilles. But for better security from the invasions of pirates and Saracens, the holy guardians of the body brought it inland over the mountains to a Roman town called Apt. Like other Roman towns it had its amphitheatre for games and gladiatorial contests. In a disused underground cave not far from the amphitheatre, and connected with it, they placed their precious burden, and confided it to the care of Saint Auspice, the first bishop of Apt. The place was probably a sort of catacomb for the early Christians, for here' were also

buried Saint Auspice and other martyrs and confessors of the infant Church of Apt.

When, after the conversion of the Emperor Constantine in the year A.D. 312, the Catholic religion was recognised as the religion of the Roman Empire, the Christians of Apt erected a church over the tomb of Saint Anne. But even this quiet town did not escape the invasions of the Saracens from North Africa and of other barbarians. The church was levelled to the ground, but the Christians had taken the precaution of concealing the entrance to the tomb. It was not until Charlemagne, in thanksgiving for his victories over the barbarians, vowed to erect forty churches, that Apt was chosen by him as one of the privileged places. When he came on Easter Sunday in the year 792 to be present at High Mass in this church that he had built, one thing was wanting to complete the happiness of the occasion. It was the knowledge of the place where the body of Saint Anne lay.

As if by inspiration, a deaf-mute, the son of the lord of the soil, proceeded towards the high altar, to the amazement of the worshippers at the High Mass, and beat with his fists on two flagstones. When these were removed it was found, indeed, that here was the entrance to the ancient cave. The cypress coffer, wrapt in an oriental winding-sheet, was found in which were enclosed the remains of Saint Anne. On the winding sheet were inscribed the words that dispelled all doubt: "Here lies the body of Saint Anne, Mother of the Glorious Virgin Mary."

The fame of Apt spread throughout Europe, and Popes, Cardinals, Kings, and other illustrious person ages journeyed from afar to visit the sanctuary and venerate the relics. In the year 1338 a Bull of Benedict XII recognized the authenticity of the relics, and in 1404 Benedict XIII declared

that the body of Saint Anne, Mother of the Glorious Virgin Mary, lies at Apt from ancient times in an oratory or crypt under the high altar." So great was the application for relics from all over Europe that the French Parliament, in 1621, thought it well to interfere and forbid their being granted without the express permission of the King. The body of Saint Anne now lies in the Chapel Royal, built in 1660, as an addition to the basilica, by Anne of Austria, the Queen of Louis XIII of France. This price less gift was in thanksgiving to God for the answer to her prayer, through the intercession of Saint Anne, that she might become the mother of a son, who should succeed to the French throne. The child that was born to her became afterwards Louis XIV.

Year after year the seafaring folk of Marseilles come to Apt to lay their offerings at the shrine of Saint Anne and to return their thanks for their protection at sea. She is their patroness, the patroness of sailors, she whose body had been carried safely over the waters in a rudder less boat to their famous port. Apt is the cradle of devotion to Saint Anne.

In Rome

Devotion to Saint Anne was bound up with the devotion to her Blessed Daughter, under the title of Mary's Conception, or, as we call it to-day, her Immaculate Conception, East and West honoured Mother and Daughter in this respect. But the first striking evidence we have of the popularity of devotion to Saint Anne in Rome be longs to the middle of the eighth century. This is found in no less important a place than the papal chapel annexed to the papal palace, at the foot of the Palatine hill, where the palaces of the pagan emperors stood centuries previously. The evidence is afforded in an ancient fresco or wall-painting in that chapel of the three great exemplars of Christian mothers. The figures consist of Mary

and the Christ Child, Elizabeth and the child John (the Baptist), and Anne and the child Mary.

To remove all doubt as to their identity, the words, Mary, Elizabeth, and Anne were painted underneath,

The fresco seems to be the result of a visit of Pope Constantine to Constantinople, in the early eighth century, for the restoration of the sixth century church dedicated to Saint Anne. It would seem that the Pope wished to put on permanent record his own devotion to Saint Anne. Fortunately, this valuable fresco was discovered, in 1912, after the ancient chapel had been overbuilt by another chapel for nine centuries. It is of supreme importance in this that it is a papal recognition of devotion to Saint Anne in Rome at least twelve centuries ago.

Another papal recognition of the devotion to Saint Anne is found in the Archconfraternity of Papal Grooms attached to the Vatican palace. The position of papal groom belonged to those who walked beside the stirrups of the riders, and was instituted about the beginning of the fifth century when the Popes appeared in public surrounded by their noble retinue..

Many emperors, kings, and nobles considered it a privilege to lead the horse of the Pope on such occasions. So, too, was it a great privilege to lead the white horse of the Corpus Domini which carried the Blessed Sacrament in front of the Pope. A certain nobility then surrounded the persons of those grooms who were the recipients of many valuable concessions from the Popes.

Their guild had Saint Anne as its patroness, and was provided with a special chapel in the old basilica of Saint Peter's. But when the present basilica was built, Pius IV, 1565, had a new church built for it close to the Vatican.

Since the taking of Rome from the Pope in 1870 by the Italians, the position of the grooms has changed. To-day they are the attendants in the papal palace, and these continue the ancient guild, with the Dean of the Sacred College of Cardinals as their protector.

The same quaint, scarlet livery of the grooms of medieval days is still worn by the attendants in the papal ante-chambers and in the pontifical processions in Saint Peter's. It is their duty to carry the chair on which the Pope is borne in those processions. Although, since 1870, this guild of papal grooms has been despoiled of all its exterior grandeur, yet it still retains its ancient devotion and activity and is richly endowed with indulgences and special privileges by many Popes. Recently Pius XI has made the Church of Saint Anne the parish church of the new Vatican City.

In Florence

Florence can boast of the unique distinction of having its republic dedicated to Saint Anne. After many vicissitudes the republic chose the Duke of Athens, a French soldier of fortune, as its head on the 8th of September, 1342, In less than a year he had so disgusted all classes in the state that it was decided to depose him. On the feast of Saint Anne, 26th of July, 1343, he was besieged in the Palazzo Vecchio, and, after some days, capitulated. In thanksgiving for this delivery of the republic from the tyrant, "it was ordained by the Commune that the feast of Saint Anne should ever be kept like Easter in Florence, and that there should be celebrated a Solemn Office and great offerings by the Commune and all the Arts of Florence." So wrote the historian Giovanni Villani who was a witness of those events.

Before the ancient statue of Saint Anne in the church of Saint Michael, the Commune and the Arts yearly made their

solemn offerings. On her lap is the Christ Child, and standing at her side is Mary. This is how the Italians loved to represent Saint Anne; the same grouping is found in the altar-piece in the guild chapel in Rome of the Papal Grooms. So popular became the devotion to Saint Anne in Florence that we find the greatest painters of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries depicting on the walls of the new churches and cloisters the whole story of Saint Anne, Saint Joachim, and the Virgin Mary.

Saint Anne d'Auray

Through the constant intercourse by trading with Marseilles, it is most probable that England and Wales received in the early centuries of Christianity their devotion to Saint Anne. When the hardy Britons were driven from England by the Saxons in the fifth century they took refuge in Wales, and many of them landed on the northern coast of France. Here they set up a Breton colony, and have preserved to this day their ancient Celtic language and civilization.

Their devotion to Saint Anne, which they brought with them from Britain, has been always fervent and child like, and has made them renowned throughout the whole world. It is their family devotion, and no nation is so conspicuous for Christian family ideals. They attribute the preservation of their nationality and of their primitive fervour and faith to their devotion to * Madame Saint Anne."

In many places in the early years of their colonization of Brittany they erected chapels in her honour. The earliest of these was that of Keranna (the Cahir or fortified place of Anna), which was destroyed about the year 700 by Frankish plunderers. For nine centuries all trace of the church had disappeared, and only a vague tradition remained to tell of its former existence in a field called Bocenno and that the

walls of the barn there were built of the stones of the chapel. Here lived a pious peasant called Yves Nicolazic. There was nothing remarkable about him. He was just an upright, common sense man, who used to say his Rosary as he went to and from his work in the fields, and who had a great love for Saint Anne, whom he called his "Good Mistress."

To this pious peasant Saint Anne appeared on several occasions in the year 1623, as he was driving home the oxen, or as he returned from Confession, or again as he lay in the barn guarding the newly-threshed corn. After many months she revealed to him: "I am Anne, Mother of Mary." And she directed him to tell the rector to rebuild the old chapel in her honour which had been destroyed 924 years previously. The rector looked upon Yves only as a visionary, and bade him go home and say his prayers. Even when the ancient statue of Saint Anne was discovered by Yves and his neighbours exactly where Saint Anne herself had pointed out, the rector refused to regard it as genuine. But the Breton people, true to their traditional devotion to the saint, journeyed even from far-off places to see the ancient statue miraculously recovered, and to lay their offerings before it for the rebuilding of the church.

So great became the concourse of people that the bishop of the diocese considered it imperative to hold an official inquiry into the recent events. After various examinations of Yves and his neighbours before legal and theological experts the bishop was forced to admit that the events told by Yves were indeed realities, and ordered the erection of the church. Thus, the little village of Keranna became "the capital of the cult of Saint Anne," and under the name of Saint Anne d'Auray, represents what Lourdes is for the devotion to Saint Anne's Daughter, Mary Immaculate.

According to a Breton legend, every Breton must go once to Saint Anne, namely, either to her shrine at Auray or to herself in Heaven. More than 200,000 pilgrims come annually for the feast of this celebrated shrine. It is one of the most wonderful sights in the world. The peasants come on foot, on horseback, in strange country carts. The wealthy, too, come in their carriages or motors. Even old men and women will walk all through the day and night to be in time for the Pardon of Saint Anne. The favours received are countless, and are subject to a rigid inquiry as at Lourdes. Every square inch of the walls of the magnificent basilica is covered with slabs of costly marble on which are inscribed, in letters of gold, thanks to Saint Anne for benefits bestowed. It is the national shrine of Brittany, and has been endowed by Popes with signal favours.

In England

Through the influence of the Bretons, their neighbours, the Normans, fostered a fervent devotion to Saint Anne. The Normans were a powerful and prosperous nation, had a great love for elaborate church ceremony, and were the builders of magnificent cathedrals. In honour of their great patron and bishop, Saint Audoen or Ouen, they built the beautiful church of Saint Ouen at Rouen. When they conquered England in 1066 they brought with them not only their wonderful civilization but devotion to their patron saints, among whom were foremost Saint Anne and Saint Ouen. It would be a big task to give even a list of the chapels, chantries, and guilds they erected throughout England in honour of Saint Anne. So, too, would it be to enumerate the holy wells of Saint Anne. The chief feature of this devotion was the institution of the Guilds of Saint Anne. These were associations of men and women for mutual aid, for the relief of the sick and those in prison, for the burial of the dead with suitable religious rites, and for Masses for living and

dead brethren. They likewise helped to maintain schools for the children of the members, to perform mystery plays in the public streets, to help pilgrims to visit the holy places in Jerusalem, Rome, and Spain, to maintain bridges, etc. Their chief object, however, was to encourage charity and holy living. But they had also their guild halls not only for transacting business but for their convivial meetings on the feast of their patroness.

Devotion to Saint Anne progressed side by side with devotion to Mary's Immaculate Conception. In fact, after the devotion to Mary, that of Saint Anne seems to have been almost a national devotion in England in the three centuries preceding the so-called Reformation. So important were her guilds that the English kings granted them charters to hold property for the purposes of the guilds, and the privilege of a seal for their transactions. We cannot omit mention of some of the great guilds, at Lincoln, Newgate in London, Norfolk and Suffolk, Chan try chapels were to be found in the principal parochial churches, Shrines, too, to Saint Anne dotted the land. The shrine of Saint Anne of Buxton with its famous well is, perhaps, the most renowned, but that at Caversham, Reading, has more historical associations, and is linked with the memory of the great family of William Mareschal, Earl of Pembroke, who filled many important pages in Irish history.

It was the duty of the chaplain of Saint Anne's, Caversham, to collect the toll from passengers who used the old bridge here over the Thames. It was from the money thus collected that the bridge was repaired and preserved for the conveyance of pilgrims, scholars and others going to Oxford. Besides fulfilling many other useful functions, the Shrines of Saint Anne thus carried on the work of our present public bodies.

Another interesting feature of the work of these guilds is handed down to us in the annals of the Guild of Saint Anne, Lincoln. A brother of the guild who would make pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Rome, or Saint James of Compostella, Spain, must first of all surrender any guild property he may have in his hands. On his setting out, the brethren lead him as far as the Cross on Lincoln Green, and there the Graceman, or Master, gives him 2 pence, the two wardens 1 pence, and every guild brother 1 pence. On his return he is met at the same place and conducted with joy and honour to the cathedral church, and thence to his home. If the officers have certain news that a brother has died on pilgrimage, the bell is tolled, and Mass said as if the dead were amongst them and each brother pays pence for bread in soul-alms. The bread here referred to is evidently the "blessed-bread," or loaf, which was blessed at the end of Mass, cut into small pieces, and divided amongst the brothers and sisters as a sign of common brotherhood. Besides Masses for a deceased person on the day of burial, Month's Mind, and Anniversary, free burial was provided for poor members by the brethren of the guilds.

As the possessions of religious houses dazzled the covetous eyes of Henry VIII, so too did the church-plate, ornaments, goods and chattels of the guilds. A searching survey was ordered to be made, and eventually having suppressed the guilds and chantries, Henry's son, Edward, confiscated the possessions. The desecration of the shrines at Buxton and Caversham by order of Thomas Cromwell, the tool of Henry VIII, is one of the most disgraceful episodes in the sordid history of the so-called Reformation.

At Caversham, Cromwell's agent reported to his master how he pulled down the images of the twin chapels of Our Lady and Saint Anne, but, Our Lady's image being plated over with silver, he sent it to Cromwell. A similar procedure took

place at Buxton. In both cases: the altars, tabernacles, ornaments, and the crutches of the cured were pulled down so that pilgrims might not frequent the shrines in future. Notwithstanding all the forces of Protestantism, the English Catholics kept their traditional devotion to Saint Anne alive in their hearts. When the storm of persecution had passed, Saint Anne was restored to her honoured place in their public veneration, especially in the places dedicated to her in ancient times.

In Ireland - Youghal

The earliest traces we can find of devotion to Saint Anne in Ireland are met with at Youghal. On the western point of the harbour's mouth stood from ancient times a chapel dedicated to Saint Anne, the patroness of mariners. Tradition affirms that it was built of hurdles and was: used as a place of devotion by the sailors who earned their bread on the perilous waters, and by their dependents who came to pray for their safe return. All this points to the probability that this devotion came here directly from Brittany, with which the sailors of the south Irish coast were in constant communication. Around the old chapel was a graveyard in which were: found many early Christian tombs. Years came and went, and brought with them many changes in Ireland. In the twelfth century, Youghal was occupied by the Anglo-Norman adventurers, who colonized it with men and women from Bristol. The Saint Anne Chapel they bestowed on a community of nuns about the year 1190, and erected a lighthouse beside it on the cliff. The religious house was richly endowed by the founders on condition that the nuns should see that the light in the light-house was regularly maintained. The founders. relied on the piety and gallantry of the native Irish that. they would offer no violence to the nuns, and thus the light-house would be of great assistance to the Anglo Norman mariners.

The community shared the same fate as many another in Ireland at the hands of Henry VIII. It was dissolved in 1542, and a lease made of the property to a private individual. The tower, however, remained. In 1644 a French traveller thus mentions Saint Anne's: "At musket shot from the town (Youghal) there was formerly a con vent of nuns on the seashore, and there remains of it a Tower called the Nunnery, upon which the nuns used to light torches to enable vessels to come into the harbour during the night." The tower was circular, about twenty-four feet in height, and ten in diameter. The only entrance was a narrow Gothic doorway, and a flight of stone steps, in spiral formation, led to the summit to two large circular-headed windows. One of these windows opened on the middle of the bay, and the other faced Capel Island, thus allowing the light of the torches to show on two important points. From the circular and pointed arches, jointly used in this building, we are enabled to fix its date in the semi-Romanesque, or transition period, at the close of the twelfth and commencement of the thirteenth centuries. The old tower was perhaps the only Anglo-Norman light-tower that reached our day. In the summer of 1848 it was demolished in order to make way for the present harbour light-house. Fortunately, two illustrations are extant which represent the old tower as it was in 1848, and serve to remind us of the ancient devotion of the native Irish here to Saint Anne.

In Ireland - Dublin

After the Anglo Norman Invasion of 1170, Dublin gradually became an English colony. It became a prosperous city, in commerce and industry, and could boast of a large number of trade guilds to protect the crafts. Each of these guilds severally had its chantry chapel, in one or other of the many small churches, and also its patron saint. There were also religious guilds or confraternities attached to some of the

churches for the same purposes as in England. The most important of these was that of Saint Anne in Saint Audoen's Church, High Street.

This church was the first built in Dublin by the Colonists, about the year 1190, and the only one that has survived in anything like its original form, except the Cathedrals, Christ Church and Saint Patrick's, which in their complete state were somewhat later. It was erected near the Newgate at the ancient city walls, and was dedicated to the patron saint of the Normans, Saint Audoen or Ouen. It is interesting to mention here that it was Audoen's father, a French nobleman, who entertained our own Saint Columbanus on his missionary journey through France. In return for this hospitality the Irish saint blessed Audoen, who became the celebrated bishop of Rouen (died 683). Such are the ways of Divine Providence that Saint Columbanus became an honoured name in France, and Saint Audoen in Dublin.

There is scarcely any doubt that the devotion to Saint Anne in Dublin was contemporary with the colonization of Dublin. Although the Anglo-Normans were fierce warriors, lusty adventurers, and unscrupulous spoilers, yet they combined with all this an extraordinary regard for magnificent church ceremonial and devotion to their patron saints. Their veneration for Saint Anne they brought with them from Normandy. So popular became the devotion in Dublin that the Archbishop, in a Provincial Council in 1352, ordered the festival of 26th July to be celebrated as a holiday of obligation. This decree held for the whole province of Leinster. More over, a Proper Mass and Office of Saint Anne were ordered to be said on the feast. From all this it is abundantly clear that the people of Leinster, and particularly of Dublin, had been clamouring for special recognition of the popular devotion to Saint Anne.

It was, however, the saintly Henry VI of England who gave the religious guilds in the fifteenth century due recognition by granting them charters and other privileges. His charter of the year 1430 to Saint Anne's Guild in Saint Audoen's granted it permission to support six chantry priests to celebrate at the various altars in the church for the brothers and sisters of the guild. Besides their offices in church these priests, living together in what was called the College of Saint Audoen's, educated the children of the guild members when education was not as popular or as cheap as it is today. The guild not only combined the advantages of a co-operative and tontine society, by granting loans for commerce at a small interest, but it was above all a Burial Society. Reverence for the dead was a characteristic feature of our mediaeval brethren. The world moved slowly, no doubt, in those days, and the members of the guild consigned the body of a deceased brother or sister to the grave attached to the church with the greatest solemnity. They were bound to attend at the Requiem Mass, to carry torches, and to celebrate the Month's Mind. Even on the anniversaries the dead were not forgotten.

The guild acquired considerable property in lands in the county Dublin and in tenements in the city, and the property was vested in the master and wardens of the guild. The revenue was devoted to the purposes of the guild, religious and commercial. Thus did the guild fulfil its useful purpose until the so-called Reformation devoted its funds to uses other than the original founders: and benefactors thought of, or would have tolerated. It is beyond the devices of man to establish now in whose hands lies the guild property, so cleverly have the leases been secreted. Even the fifteenth century fresco or wall-painting over the guild-altar of Saint Anne has been allowed by the Protestant usurpers of old Saint Audoen's to be exposed to the weather, and thus gradually and visibly to disappear. It was the only remnant

of the ancient guild of Saint Anne to remind us of its past greatness, its meaning and its influence in the life of the people of Dublin five centuries ago. In this case also: we are fortunate in having a drawing of the quaint painting in which Mary is represented at Anne's knees, above them God the Father, with the Dove (Holy Ghost) on His breast, and holding the suspended figure of the Crucified Saviour, whilst angels with harps surround the group.

Although the traces of the ancient guild have been allowed to disappear, yet the devotion to Saint Anne in a modern form has been fittingly and unexpectedly revived. In the present Saint Audoen's, built beside its Catholic ancestor, Saint Anne is honoured not only by the parishioners, and by the Dublin people in general, but by many from various parts of Ireland, so that the shrine has become a veritable place of pilgrimage." Amends are thus being made to Madame Saint Anne for the lapse of her ancient devotion among the people of Dublin, and indeed of all Ireland. The overdue revival has at last come about, and Ireland will again take her place among the nations in honouring the mother of the Mother of God.

In Ireland - Wexford and Galway

There are traces in a few other places in Ireland of the ancient devotion to Saint Anne: The diocese of Ferns seems to have fostered it in pre-Reformation days, for at least three churches bear her name, at Killanne, Tom haggard, and Ballyconnick, Numerous holy wells, also bearing her name, are dotted over the countryside, and a "Pattern" of Saint Anne was held at Tomhaggard.

Galway can likewise boast of its ancient devotion to Saint Anne. In the north wing of the old Collegiate Church of Saint Nicholas stood the chapel and altar of Saint Anne. From this

it is clear that devotion to our saint was on lines similar to that in Saint Audoen's, Dublin, and that this chapel belonged to a guild of Saint Anne, with several priests attached to it for the devotions of the guild. Saint Nicholas was the patron of mariners, and so also was Saint Anne. This double dedication points to a living and very important devotion among the ancient seafaring people of Galway to their patrons of the seas. It would seem that their devotion to Saint Anne came to them directly from Brittany through the Irish mariners, as in the case of Youghal.

It is interesting then to find among the earliest pilgrims, who flocked to the new seventeenth century shrine, at Auray in Brittany, a distinguished Galway man, the Most Rev. Francis Kirwan, Bishop of Killala. This took place about twenty years after the finding of the ancient statue of Saint Anne at Keranna. After a long imprisonment in Galway during the Cromwellian persecution the bishop sought refuge in Brittany, and journeyed to Auray to pay his respects to Madame Saint Anne.

His chaplain, Father Kilkelly, told his biographer, Archdeacon Lynch, the incidents of that pilgrimage as follows: "After a short stay at Rennes, when the winter was advanced, the bishop fulfilled a vow he had made to go on pilgrimage to the Temple of Saint Anne. This church is held in the highest veneration, and is frequented by a perpetual concourse of devout people. Here he spent eight days in retreat, devoting himself to prayer and holy meditation. The festival of Christmas he spent in the convent of the Capuchins of Auray, and thence proceeded to the Carthusians, half a league distant; with the latter he spent nine days, and though over seventy years of age he refused to make use of flesh meat, though it had been prepared for him by the order of the prior.

"One of the religious, a septuagenarian, was then lying ill of a grievous malady, and hearing that the bishop was staying in the convent, anxiously desired to be visited by him. The bishop, in compliance with the sick man's request, called on him, and after some pious conversation was about taking leave of him, when he signed him with the Sign of the Cross, and bestowed on him his benediction. Next day the sick monk called for the bishop's chaplain, and after telling him the history of his life before he joined the Carthusians, addressed him thus: 'I was anxious to speak to you that you might be certified by my lips that owing to the merits of the bishop I am not only relieved, but absolutely cured of my ailment, and snatched from the jaws of death; while the bishop lives keep this fact to yourself, but should you survive him fail not to make it known.'"

It would seem then that Saint Anne made one of our Irish bishops the dispenser of a favour at her celebrated shrine of Auray.

It only remains to mention, in connection with Saint Anne devotion in Galway, that in the Middle Ages be quests were made for the upkeep of the fabric of her chapel in Saint Nicholas's, and that a Saint Anne Well stood about half-a-mile towards the west of the town near the strand.

In Canada

With the French colonization of Canada, in the middle of the seventeenth century, it was natural to expect that devotion to Saint Anne would be part of the religious life of the colonists. This actually was the case, for it was. the Bretons and the Normans who were the first to emigrate to it. Breton mariners, navigating the treacherous Saint Lawrence river, had almost given themselves up for lost when they turned in prayer to their Good Saint Anne. Their vow to construct a

chapel in her honour, if they landed safely, was religiously kept when they reached the north bank of the river at Beaulieu. These were the hardy pioneers of the wonderful devotion of Canadians of the present day to Saint Anne, and their little chapel was the forerunner of the magnificent basilica in her honour in 1876. The devotion is a national one, and the basilica was a national monument, and one of the most beautiful on the American continent,

Alas, however, this splendid sanctuary, the centre of Canadian devotion, and the scene of so many favours and miracles, was destroyed by fire in 1922, and even its wooden successor was destroyed a few years afterwards. It is suspected that these fires were not accidental, and that an anti-Christian organization had some part in them. By merciful disposition of Divine Providence, the magnificent statue of Saint Anne and her precious relics escaped unharmed. The new basilica already planned will be even on a grander scale than its predecessors.

What Lourdes is to France, and Auray to Brittany, Beaulieu is to Canada. The pilgrimages have assumed enormous proportions, and the numbers who visited the shrine in recent years amount to several hundred thousands yearly. On either side of the main doorway of the basilica might be seen huge pyramids of crutches, walking-sticks, canes, bandages, and even spectacles, which were left behind by the cripples, the lame, the blind, etc., who thus left testimony to their recovery through the intercession of their Good Saint Anne. Truly Beaulieu is a marvellous manifestation of the fervour of the devotion of the Canadians to their generous patroness.

In New York

It is only in recent years that New York has taken its place among the peoples of the world in paying special honour to Mary's mother. The hearts of its people were touched on the occasion of the transference of the famous relic of Saint Anne from Rome to Beaupré in the year 1892, At their request the relic was exposed for veneration in the Canadian Church of Saint John the Baptist on East 76th Street. Instead of a few days, it was exposed for three weeks, so great was the concourse of people. It is estimated that about 300,000 came to venerate it.

When the relic was about to be taken away on its journey to Beaupré a scene of indescribable emotion followed. The people, amid their tears and sobs, cried out, "Good-bye, Saint Anne! Good-bye! Come back to us soon, Saint Anne. Come back to stay!" Good Saint Anne came back - to stay. A few months afterwards a large portion of the original relic of Beaupré was brought to New York. Thus was inaugurated the magnificent shrine in that city which has become, almost a national shrine for the United States, During the annual novena before the feast-day, 26th July, a rough estimate places the number of pilgrims at over 60,000, with 10,000 and more on the feast itself.

To recount further the various places of devotion to Saint Anne would take us beyond the limits of this little book. Suffice it to say that South America, Spain, Austria, Luxembourg, and Switzerland are most prominent in the extent and warmth of their veneration. There is scarcely a church in Switzerland in which there is not a picture, statue, or painting of Saint Anne and Mary, In fact, it is the family devotion of the Swiss, and, with the group of Joseph and the Christ Child, typifies the Holy Family.

Conclusion

Although Saint Anne was descended from the royal house of David, yet her real glory is that she is the mother of the family of the God-Man Himself, the mother of Mary and the grandmother of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.. That title is above all praise, and places Saint Anne in a position second only, among mere creatures, to her Daughter, Mary. Mary's glory is reflected in her Mother, and Saint Anne has co-operated more than all others, except Mary, in the divine work of the Incarnation. She was the final preparation for Our Lady in the carrying out of God's redemption of mankind. After the Immaculate Virgin, Saint Anne comes closest to Jesus. That is sufficient claim for the veneration and devotion of Christ's children to the Great and Good Saint Anne.

"Among all God's gifts," says a learned Bishop, "a Christian mother is the greatest. It is mothers who implant the germs of future saints. Is it not a perpetual stimulus to mothers to look upon Saint Anne as their protectress so that she may obtain for them the grace from God to bring up their children, especially their daughters, in His holy love? She is a model to be imitated, and a powerful advocate to obtain the grace to preserve for Jesus Christ these tender souls as living temples of sanctity, as she prepared Our Blessed Lady to receive the Son of God into her womb."

Catholic Encyclopedia - Sainte Anne de Beaupré

Devotion to Saint Anne, in Canada, goes back to the beginning of New France, and was brought thither by the first settlers and early missionaries. The hardy pioneers soon began to till the fertile soil of the Beaupré hillside; in the region which now forms the parish of Sainte Anne de Beaupré the first houses date from the year 1650. Nor was it long before the settlers built themselves a chapel where they might meet for Divine worship. One of their number, the Sieur Etienne Lessard, offered to give the land required at the spot which the church authorities should find suitable. On 13 March, 1658, therefore, the missionary, Father Vignal, came to choose the site and to bless the foundation of the proposed chapel which, by general consent, was to be dedicated to Saint Anne. The very day the Saint showed how favourably she viewed the undertaking by healing Louis Guimont, an inhabitant of Beaupré, who suffered terribly from rheumatism of the loins. Full of confidence in Saint Anne, he came forward and placed three stones in the foundations of the new building, whereupon he found himself suddenly and completely cured of his ailment.

This first authentic miracle was the precursor of countless other graces and favours of all kinds. For two centuries and a half the great wonder-worker has ceaselessly and lavishly shown her kindness to all the sufferers who from all parts of North America flock every year to Beaupré to implore her help. The old church was begun in 1676, and used for worship until 1876, when it was replaced by the present one, opened in October of that year. This last was built of cut stone, by means of contributions from all the Catholics of Canada. The offerings made by pilgrims have defrayed the

cost of fittings and decoration. It is two hundred feet long, and one hundred wide, including the side chapels. Leo XIII raised it to the rank of a minor basilica 5 May, 1887; on 19 May, 1889, it was solemnly consecrated by Cardinal Taschereau, Archbishop of Quebec. It has been served by the Redemptorists since 1878. On either side of the main doorway are huge pyramids of crutches, walking-sticks, bandages, and other appliances left behind by the cripples, lame, and sick, who, having prayed to Saint Anne at her shrine, have gone home healed.

Relics

The canons of Carcassonne, at the request of Monseigneur de Laval, first Bishop of Quebec, sent to Beaupré a large relic of the finger-bone of Saint Anne, which was first exposed for veneration on 12 March 1670, and has ever since been an object of great devotion. Three other relics of the saint have been added in later times to the treasures of this shrine. In 1892 Cardinal Taschedreau presented the Great Relic to the basilica, the wrist-bone of Saint Anne. It measures four inches in length, and was brought from Rome by Monsignor Marquis, P.A.

Pilgrimage

The pilgrimage to Beaupré has not always had the importance which it has gained in our time. Only in the last quarter of the nineteenth century did it attain to the growth, organization, and fame which now render it comparable with the great pilgrimages to Lourdes. Until 1875 the yearly number of pilgrims did not exceed 12,000, but to judge by the heap of crutches left at the saint's feet, there must always have been many marvellous cures wrought at Beaupré. More favourable conditions - including the strong impulse given by Cardinal Taschereau and his suffragans,

the zeal of the Canadian clergy in organizing pilgrimages, improved modes of transportation, and the monthly "Annales de la Bonne Sainte Anne" - made possible the truly wonderful growth of these pilgrimages in the early twentieth century. Devotion to Saint Anne is today more than ever the devotion of the Canadians.

Sermon on Saint Anne, by Saint Vincent Ferrer

"You have your fruit unto sanctification." (Romans 6:22) This text is found originally in Romans 6, and is read in the epistle of the current solemnity. Today's feast and solemnity is of that blessed and holy mother of the Virgin Mary, Saint Ann. And just as the business of the mass is about her, so shall our sermon be. And, if it pleases God about her life we shall have many good teachings for the correction of sins and the instruction of our souls, and good information. But first let us "Hail" the Virgin Mary.

I present the proposed text of Saint Ann saying, "You, blessed Ann, have your fruit, the Virgin Mary, in your sanctification." For the declaration of which it must be known that the question is between several persons, why holy mother the Church and the Christian people have not made a feast for the father of the Virgin Mary, holy and just, called Joachim, just as for her mother Saint Ann. I reply that although Joachim was holy and a blessed friend of God nevertheless Saint Ann was of a greater sanctity. Reason, because she had a greater relationship [*participationem*] with the Virgin Mary, her daughter. For a father participates somewhat with his children, but a mother who bears them for nine months, and after giving birth, nurses, feeds, sleeps with them and kisses them. Because therefore Saint Ann had a greater relationship with the Virgin Mary her daughter, the fount of all holiness, who was holy already existing in the womb of her mother, think therefore how much holiness remained in Saint Ann who bore her and nourished her, by giving her what she had, the Virgin Mary gave holiness to her mother, and so she was holier, more perfect, and more spiritual than her husband Joachim.

Note, the similarity to that of the rose, which is picked by one, and given to another, and that one carries it and holds it in a closed hand. In whom therefore does more of the fragrance of that rose or apple remain, in the one giving or the one receiving? Certainly it is in the one receiving. So the Rose of Paradise and the Apple of Virtues, the Virgin Mary, was given by Joachim to Saint Ann through generation, and Saint Ann received, bore and nurtured, and nursed her for three years, more of the odor of sanctity therefore remained in her.

This is the reason why there is a feast of Saint Ann, and not of Joachim. Thus the scripture text, the authority, which deals well with the proposition. "Rejoice, you just, in the Lord," you Christians, "and give praise to the remembrance of his holiness," of the holiness of Saint Ann. (Psalm 96:12) This reason the theme touches saying, "You have your fruit unto sanctification," (Romans 6:22), greater than her father Joachim. The theme text is clear.

I find that Saint Ann had her fruit, the Virgin Mary, mother of the Lord Jesus Christ:

By desiring at length (*Desiderando longe*)

By hoping firmly (*Sperando certe*)

By conserving worthily. (*Conservando digne.*)

Desiring at Length

First, I say, that Saint Ann had her fruit, the Virgin Mary, by desiring for a long time. Saint Jerome says, that Saint Joachim a noble man from the town of Bethlehem got married and for 20 years was without the fruit of marriage, not having offspring. The reason was Ann who was sterile and barren. She was so cold that her metabolism prevented

conception. On this account she was completely saddened. Reason, because marriage is ordered to procreation of children, because everything else was not worth a penny. Therefore seeing that by her natural power she was not able to have a child, she grasped at the four ways, that she might have one by the power of God.

First, through devout prayers,

Second, through giving alms,

Third, by many fasts,

Fourth, by a vow and promise.

Devout Prayers

For the first she went often to the temple to pray, that God might give them the fruit of marriage, because that is the end, so trees are planted in the garden, that they might bear fruit; and they said, "Lord you have placed us in the garden of marriage, etc." And weeping they begged for a child. So on one occasion when Saint Ann saw a sparrow's nest in the garden, Saint Ann, in tears, said to God, "O Lord, you have given to this sparrow so many chicks, for which with great labor she provides. Lord give me a child." Behold the first manner of turning to God, by praying, because no one else can give a son or a daughter, for creation is required for that. For God forms the body in the womb of the mother, like you form a statue of earth or clay, and then he creates the soul out of nothing. Knowing this Job said, "Your hands have made me, and fashioned me" – neither father nor mother – "wholly round about, and do you thus cast me down headlong on a sudden? Remember, I beseech you, that you have made me as the clay, and you will bring me into dust again. Have you not milked me as milk, and curdled me like cheese?" (Job 10:8-10).

Now you have to know that it is the sin of many who when they cannot have a child of their marriage turn to diviners and fortune tellers etc. And so repent and confess, and seek from God, because if the fruit of marriage be useful to your soul, infallibly he shall give it to you. The authority of Christ on this: "Amen, amen I say to you: if you ask the Father any thing in my name, he will give it you," (John 16:23). Note: "In my name," which is Jesus, that is, savior. It is asked in the name of the savior when a man ask something useful for salvation, and not for damnation.

Giving Alms

Second, Joachim and Ann begged God for a child through alms, because the angel said to Tobias, "Prayer is good with fasting and alms more than to lay up treasures of gold." (Tobit 12:8) And because they were rich, not from usurious interest, but from their possessions. And Jerome says, that he divided his goods into three parts. The first he gave to God. The second to pilgrims, orphans and the poor. The third they kept for themselves and the family's house. Note how he divided his grain: The first part he sent to the temple, the second was set out for the poor, the third for themselves. The same for the wine, the oil and the rest. In this manner prayer is aided by alms, and vice versa. Therefore scripture says, "Give alms out of your substance, and turn not away your face from any poor person: for so it shall come to pass that the face of the Lord shall not be turned from you." (Tobit 4:7)

Morally, we find this teaching, that if you are not able to give so much alms as you are bound, nor does the heart suffice, you should pay at least a tenth and first-fruits. There are some who say, "O shall I give my goods to wicked sensual (*concupinariis*) clergymen? Certainly not!" It is said that it is given to God, and not to them. If however God has bad

clergy, he shall castigate them, and by this you ought not to hold back from them their right. For if a king has bad soldiers, you ought not for this reason withhold from him what is due, because someone else would receive the commission for him. So too for God, because, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof: the world, and all they that dwell therein," (Psalm 23:1). And he grants it to us for an annual account, and in a sign of his dominion he keeps for himself a tenth, but he does not eat it, but gives it to his servants. And when it is paid well, he keeps and conserves it, otherwise all is lost. When you believe you have grain or wine does not God say, "Because you paid me badly, I shall devastate all. And so come storms, hail etc." Therefore Malachi said: "For you afflict me. And you have said: Wherein do we afflict you? in tithes and in first fruits. And you are cursed with want, and you afflict me, even the whole nation of you." (Malachi 3:8-9) This is the remedy. "Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in my house, and try me in this, says the Lord: if I open not unto you the flood-gates of heaven, and pour you out a blessing even to abundance. And I will rebuke for your sakes the devourer," (Malachi 3:10-11). Note, "Bring". He does not say that it will be dumped into the vineyards and fields, that the beasts, and the pigs, etc. can eat.

Also if you cannot give as much alms as Saint Ann, at least return your thefts, extorted interest, loot, damages and acres. And so James says, "I made good all the damage: whatsoever was lost by theft, you did exact it of me." (Genesis 31:39)

Fasting

Third they petitioned with fasting, although they were noble and delicate, yet they kept all fasts and precepts and even more, saying, "That from our flesh may proceed the fruit of

marriage, let us make the fruit of fastings. And each could say, "I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer shall be turned into my bosom." (Psalm 34:13)

Morally, you have here the teaching that you should keep the fasts of the church. To this especially are bound those who can have one good meal. Others, laborers, excuse themselves from the fast of the church, who nevertheless are not excused if they do not hear mass fasting. Also they do not drink in the taverns in the place where they have a home. So the Apostle, "What, have you not houses to eat and to drink in?" against those who drink in taverns, "Or despise ye the church of God," against those who do not come to mass fasting. (I Corinthians 11:22)

Vows and Promises

Fourth they sought a child from God by promises, because together Joachim and Ann made a vow that if God would give them the fruit of marriage, they would serve God in the temple. Just as now if you would promise to become a religious or a nun. But many are damned by promises and vows, making vows and not caring to fulfill them. It is a grave sin to break vows in any way, greater than homicide, because it is unfaithfulness. Therefore the wise man said, (Eccles. 5): "If you have vowed any thing to God, defer not to pay it: for an unfaithful and foolish promise displeases him: but whatsoever you have vowed, pay it. And it is much better not to vow, than after a vow not to perform the things promised," (Eccles 5:3-4). When they are young, they make a vow to [on pilgrimage] to Saint James (Santiago de Compostella), and the years go by, year after year, and they don't bother to fulfill it, and when they are old they ask for a dispensation from the vow. When there a definite time is fixed, within which it ought to be fulfilled. If however there is not fixed a determined time, it must be understood that they

are to fulfill it immediately. And because there are many who do not care about God, therefore they are damned. And so beware of vows. It is clear therefore how the fruit of Saint Ann was a sanctification long desired.

Hoping Firmly

Second, I say that Saint Ann had her fruit, the Virgin Mary, by hoping firmly (*sperando certe*), when it was certified by the angel, whom God sent to her. For which note here the story how Joachim and Ann came from Nazareth to Jerusalem to the temple, to offer according to their custom. When Joachim who was a noble baron wished to make an offering, a priest looked at him saying, "And who are you?" He replied, "Father I am Joachim, your servant, who has come to offer sacrifice." And the priest said, "I will certainly not accept your offering, because you are cursed by God, because you do not have a child. It is a sign that there is some hidden sin in you." And Joachim said to him, "Father, I do not know of any great sin in me, although I am not able to be excused of sin, because I do not have a child, and this displeases me very much." And the priest said to him, "Get out of the temple." And Joachim replied, "Father, do not shame me so much." And the priest said, "Surely, until you get out I will make no offering or sacrifice." Then Joachim, with great shame, left the temple. If a priest wished to act in such a way now, namely expel one of the nobles from church, immediately his knight would say, "By my body this one will die, etc. I shall find him." But Joachim patently withdrew and he did not return home out of shame because of his neighbors, but he went to his shepherds in the forest, and there, weeping, prayed saying, "O Lord, what is my sin, because I am so accursed." His wife Ann, however, who had been in the temple, when she heard that the priest so contended with her husband, and spurned him, lest she harm the priest left the temple and went home.

Here women have a model, how they should console their husbands who are upset by business, and when they come home, the wives ought to console them. But there are some who do not comfort them, rather sadden them even more. When however Saint Ann went home and did not find her husband there, she put aside every creaturely desire from herself, and on bended knees prayed for her holy and just husband that God might keep him. Behold the holy wife.

While Joachim so wept praying in the wilderness, the archangel Gabriel appeared to him, and Joachim was afraid, because this is the condition of the spirit, for flesh cannot stand the presence of a spirit. But the condition of a good spirit is to comfort immediately, saying to him, "Behold, your prayers are heard. Because of that patience which you had, God sent me to you, that I might announce to you that you, with your wife shall have a daughter, not a son, who shall be greater than all daughters, and shall be the mother of the Messiah king of heaven. And as a sign of this, go into Jerusalem, in the golden gate you will find Ann your wife, because I shall announce this also to her." And the angel withdrew, and appeared to Ann who was weeping at home, because she knew nothing about her husband. The angel spoke well saying that, "You shall be made sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." (John 16:20)

Morally, according to what I said in the first part, Joachim and Ann persisted for twenty years, praying, giving alms, fasting and vowing, and with all this they did not have a child. And because he kept his patience in this shaming inflicted on him by a priest, immediately he had the promise of a child. It follows from this that before God, patience is better than prayers, alms, fastings or promises. Now think about it, for if you will to have patience in injuries or events, this virtue counts more with God for getting that which you need in this world, and salvation in the other, than anything

else. Therefore throw out rancor, hatred, and ill will. And so sacred scripture says: "For patience is necessary for you; that, doing the will of God, you may receive the promise." (Hebrews 10:36) Behold how Saint Ann had her "fruit unto sanctification" by hoping firmly.

Conserving Worthily

Third, I say, by conserving worthily (*conservando digne*), in three ways.

First in the womb, in which the body is formed, and the spirit is created by God, on the same day and hour the Virgin Mary was sanctified. Nine months she was in the womb of her holy and blessed mother, and her mother, Saint Ann took care that she did not ride about here and there, as men do, and took care to refrain from dancing, because by this many women lose the treasure committed to them.

Second she cared after giving birth by nursing her. Thus did the holy women of old. But now immediately the wife says to her husband, "Do you have a wet nurse?" And she does this so that she is able to show off her breasts etc. They prefer not to give milk to their child, and give a bitch instead. They do evil, because just as the womb is the chamber of the child, so thus the breasts ought to be its pantry. But Saint Ann herself wanted to nurse the Virgin Mary, because sons and daughters receive their good complexion (*bonam complectionem*) from the mother, but they lose it often from bad milk. Note here the example of that nobleman in Lombardy, because he had a wet nurse for his son, who having lost her milk, nursed the child with the milk from a pig, lest she lose her contract and salary. The son became and lived like a pig. See how the complexion is destroyed. The same for captives who nurse the children of their mistresses.

Third, she cared for her in the temple. After Saint Ann had weaned the Virgin, she said to her husband, "Lord, do you not remember the vow?" He replied, "Indeed. And so we fulfill the vow." He did not say "Let us wait until she is ten years old or more." Or when they are beautiful then they say, "We shall give for her another one, hump-backed or one-eyed." And immediately Joachim and Ann presented their daughter to God in the temple, where she remained for ten continuous years in the service of God. And so we can say, Saint Ann, "You have your fruit unto sanctification," by conserving worthily.

Morally, here you have an example of staying in the temple of God on Sundays and feasts hearing mass and a sermon. He who wishes to keep the feast well, ought to do five things:

First, to cease from all temporal business, not to get a shave (*facere barbi tonsura*), nor do any other servile work. Reason, because on Sunday, Christ ceased from all business and labors by rising, and so he wished that Christians representing that resurrection and quiet ought to rest on Sundays. Same for the saints, because on that day they rested in eternal rest. Who however does not wish to rest, shall labor forever in hell.

Second, that you hear mass fasting. The reason is stated why taverns ought not to be open before mass on a feast day.

Third that you should be on time for mass. For you ought to be there at the beginning, for the "I confess," which is for your sake.

Fourth, you ought to remain at mass until the final blessing is given by the priest.

Fifth, that you ought not talk during mass, but today it is abused, because they do nothing else but talk of vain things at mass, etc. "Remember that you keep holy the Sabbath." (Exodus 20:8)

But for those who keep these five, it can be said: "You have your fruit," good works, "unto sanctification." (Romans 6:22)

From a Sermon by Saint John Damascene

Joachim and Anne, how blessed a couple! All creation is indebted to you. For at your hands the Creator was offered a gift excelling all other gifts: a chaste mother, who alone was worthy of him. Joachim and Anne, how blessed and spotless a couple! You will be known by the fruit you have borne, as the Lord says: "By their fruits you will know them." The conduct of your life pleased God and was worthy of your daughter. For by the chaste and holy life you led together, you have fashioned a jewel of virginity: she who remained a virgin before, during, and after giving birth. She alone for all time would maintain her virginity in mind and soul as well as in body. Joachim and Anne, how chaste a couple! While leading a devout and holy life in your human nature, you gave birth to a daughter nobler than the angels, whose queen she now is.

Saint Anne, Patroness of Christian Mothers

And when God, in His love, has sent you children, O Christian parents, pray then especially to Saint Anne. Let her be your patron, your friend in heaven, powerful to intercede with her beloved child, and with her child's Holy Son, for you. She was the perfect Mother, she knows your difficulties and trials in motherhood, those trials that are inseparable from the sweet vocation of parenthood.

Pray to her thus -

A Mother's Prayer

O dear Saint Anne, Patroness of Christian Mothers, I commend my children to thy holy care. God has given them to me as He gave thee Mary, and it is to Him they really belong. He has only lent them to me in sacred trust. Intercede for me that I may be worthy of that trust and that I may ever do all in my power to lead them to God, by word and example. Let their spiritual welfare be ever my first consideration, but give me also the means to supply all that is necessary for their material welfare, suitable to our state of life. Help me, thou perfect mother to imitate thee in all my dealings with my children, to be wise, unselfish, patient and tolerant and endlessly devoted to their best interests. Thou knowest the difficulties inseparable from the task of bring up children, the anxiety, the worry, the hardship of providing them sometimes with the necessities of life. Sustain me then in my trials and anxieties, and counsel me to do what is best for them materially and spiritually. Thou, who didst endure the pain of separation from thy dear child for love of God and her best interests, help me to bear the necessary

separation from my children and, when I cannot be with them to watch over them and guide them, O, Saint Anne, take them into thy keeping and do not let them go astray. Pray to your holy child for them - to her, who is the mother of Good Counsel, that she may whisper her sweet counsel into their ears at the moment of temptation and danger and be between them and all harm.

And when that last sad moment comes, when I can no longer stay with them, when death must part us, O then, Saint Anne, may the final parting be sweetened and blessed as thine was, with the loving presence of my children, and may the crowning happiness of my motherhood be the happy reunion with them, before the throne of God, forever. Amen.

*

And husbands and wives, you who have sworn fidelity to each other at God's altar; turn to Joachim and Anne for help and imitate them. They who loved each other so dearly, who were so mutually helpful and tolerant and considerate, whose love and trust was proof against all outside influence, will understand and sympathize with you.

Pray to them thus -

Prayer of the Husband and Wife

Blessed Saint Joachim and Saint Anne, patrons of Christian marriage, take us and our marriage under your protection. Blessed our union and our home. Place within its walls sweet holiness, happiness and peace. Give us mutual forbearance and an implicit trust in each other. Help us to bear each other's burdens, with an unfailing devotion and fidelity. Counsel us to bear with the many trials and ups and downs of married life with cheerful patience, serenity, and good temper, bearing with each other's faults and failings in a

forbearing spirit, and with love and sympathy and understanding waiting behind all.

Bind us together through life's long journey, till death do us part and Jesus unites us forever in His sacred arms. Amen.

*

And you, children, who are happy and fortunate to have good and loving parents, pray also to Saint Anne to make you like her, sweet, holy, loving. Ask her to intercede with Mary, with whom she is so powerful, to take you under her protection and make you loving and dutiful children.

Let this be your prayer -

The Child's Prayer to Saint Anne

O dearest Saint Anne, so beloved of Mary, what mother ever had such a perfect, loving child? Take me under thy care and make me a loving and dutiful child. Pray to Our Lady, Mother of Good Counsel, to counsel me in all my actions towards my parents. I know I receive everything from them, that they watch over constantly, with devotion and unselfish care, denying themselves everything for my happiness and welfare. Oh, make me grateful and appreciative of all their goodness. Help me to be a comfort and consolation to them, at all times, especially in sorrow and trial. Keep me from sin and temptation, that I may be unwilling to do anything that I know would grieve my parents, or displease them. Thus will I merit the rich and high reward that God Himself has promised to dutiful children. Amen.

Prayers



Invocations to Saint Anne

Saint Anne, Mother of Mary conceived without sin, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, model of mothers, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, consoler of the married, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, our patroness, Pray for us.

Memorare to Saint Anne

Remember, O holy mother, Saint Anne, whose name means grace and mercy, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession was left unaided, for you are a most merciful mother, and do aid all who are in distress. Inspired by this confidence I take refuge in you, and beseech you by your great prerogative of being the mother of the Queen of Heaven and grand-parent of the Saviour of the world, to come to my aid with your powerful intercession, and obtain from your Immaculate Daughter this favour (mention it).

In honour of the nine months during which you did bear the Ever Blessed Virgin in your womb, and did bring her forth without stain of original sin, I now offer up these nine Hail Marys, which I offer you through my angel guardian. Amen.

Act of Consecration to Saint Anne

Dear Saint Anne, glorious mother of the Blessed Virgin, and grandmother of our Savior, I rejoice in thy joy; I glory in thy honor; I offer thee my heartfelt felicitations to the unspeakable bliss of heaven which is now thy reward, and I thank God with all my heart for the graces and privileges with which he has distinguished thee above so many other saints.

O Saint Anne, I consecrate myself to thee, I choose thee to be my patroness, my advocate, my powerful intercessor at the court of heaven, and I am resolved to honor thee always. I beseech thee therefore, receive me as thy client, protect me, defend me, help me in all the necessities of life, and assist me at the hour of my death, that my soul may be saved, and that with thee I may glorify God forever. Amen.

Petitions to Saint Anne

O Saint Anne, attract to thyself the hearts of all the faithful, for thou art the sure way that leads to Mary, and by Mary, to Jesus.

Holy Mary, Saint Anne and Saint Joachim, obtain for us that we may fear sin more than death.

Saint Anne and Saint Joachim, models of fervor, patience and submission to the will of God, obtain for us the gift of prayer with the gift of resignation in all the trials that may come upon us.

Saint Anne and Saint Joachim, true models of reverence in the temple, obtain for us the piety and fervor we ought to bring to the foot of the Holy Altar, and by your reverence to God deliver our country from the hateful sin of blasphemy.

Holy Mary, Saint Anne and Saint Joachim, extend your powerful protection over all children since they are images of the living God.

Saint Anne and Saint Joachim, perfect models of husbands and fathers, of wives and mothers, obtain for all Christian families that union and peace which are the fruits of peace and humble forbearance.

O Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and Saint Anne, help us, we beg of you. We desire to devote ourselves to your service, and to invoke you every day that we may so regulate our lives as to receive the happiness of eternal life in heaven. Amen.

Prayer to Saint Anne to Obtain Some Special Favour

Glorious Saint Anne, filled with compassion for those who invoke you, and with love for those who suffer, heavily laden with the weight of my troubles, I cast myself at your feet, and humbly beg of you to take the present affair which I recommend to you under your special protection.

Vouchsafe to commend it to your Daughter, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and lay it before the throne of Jesus, so that He may bring it to a happy issue. Cease not to intercede for me until my request is granted. Above all, obtain for me the grace of one day beholding my God face to face, and with you and Mary and all the saints praising and blessing Him for all eternity. Amen.

Good Saint Anne, Mother of her who is our life, our sweetness and our hope, pray to her for us, and obtain our request. (Three times).

Prayer for the Wayward Child

O holy mother, Saint Anne, so rich in graces, you will never leave unheard the pleadings and tears of a mother who invokes you for a wayward child. Lo! You know my grief and the anguish of my heart. Look down with your maternal eyes upon this poor erring child, and bring it back upon the way of salvation that it may again serve God faithfully and obtain eternal happiness. I ask this through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Hail Mary, three times.

Prayers from the Liturgy about Saint Anne

Almighty everlasting God, You gave to Saint Anne, after the affliction of a long barrenness, the grace to bear a glorious Fruit; grant, we beg of You, that, through her merits and intercession, we may be made rich in sincere faith and fruitful in works of salvation. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

O God, You were pleased to confer Your grace upon Saint Anne, whereby she merited to become the mother of her who brought forth Your only-begotten Son; mercifully grant that, as we celebrate her memory, we may be aided by her intercession. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Prayer to Saint Joachim and Saint Anne

Great and glorious patriarch, Saint Joachim, and good Saint Anne, what joy is mine when I consider that you were chosen among all God's holy ones to assist in the fulfillment of the mysteries of God, and to enrich our earth with the great Mother of God, Mary most holy! By this singular privilege, you have become most powerful with both the Mother and her Son, so as to be able to obtain for us the graces that are needful to us.

With great confidence I have recourse to your mighty protection, and I commend to you all my needs, both spiritual and temporal, and those of my family. Especially do I entrust to your keeping the particular favor that I desire and look for from your intercession. (*Mention your favor.*)

And since you were a perfect pattern of the interior life, obtain for me the grace to pray earnestly, and never to set my heart on the passing goods of this life. Give me a lively and enduring love for Jesus and Mary. Obtain for me also a sincere devotion and obedience to Holy Church and the sovereign pontiff who rules over her, in order that I may live and die in faith and hope and perfect charity. Let me ever invoke the holy Names of Jesus and Mary. And may I thus be saved. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be (*three times*).

Indulgenced Prayer of Saint Anne

With a heart full of sincere and childlike love, I venerate you, good Saint Anne. You are that beloved and favored creature who, because of extraordinary virtue and sanctity, received from God the great privilege of giving life to Mary, full of grace and blessed among women, the mother of the Incarnate Lord.

Because of such great favors, be pleased to receive me among the number of your devoted servants, for such I claim to be, and wish to remain for the rest of my life. Keep me in your loving protection, and obtain for me from God the grace to imitate those virtues with which you were so gloriously adorned.

Help me to know my sins and to be truly sorry for them. Obtain for me an ardent love for Jesus and Mary. Aid me in observing the duties of my state of life faithfully and constantly. Protect me from all dangers in life, and assist me at the hour of my death, that I may safely reach heaven, there to praise together with you, most blessed mother, the Word of God made Man in the womb of your most pure daughter, the Blessed Virgin Mary. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be (*Three times*).

The Pilgrim's Prayer to Saint Anne

O Good Saint Anne, I have come from afar to honor and invoke thee in this hallowed Shrine, where so oft the pious pilgrim has felt the effects of thy kindness and thy power. Gladly have I traveled the distance that separated me from this holy place and have come to ask favors of thee. I hope thou wilt vouchsafe to show thyself gracious towards me as thou hast done to all who have come here with confidence.

Yes, I hope that each hour of this day will bring a new blessing. But thou knowest the special grace which I implore of thee from the depths of my heart, and which has been the aim of my prayer, and the aspiration of my soul in repairing hither. I conjure thee to hear my entreaty; do not, Good Saint, permit any of thy children to say to thee: "I have invoked thee in the place where thou hast been Pleased to display thy wonders, and thou hast had no blessing for me." No, no, thou wilt hear my prayers, and I shall return with a new benefit to publish, a new motive to confide in thy bounty, and a new bond of love to attach me to thee. Amen.

A Mother's Prayer to Saint Anne

Holy Saint Anne, Patroness of Christian families, I present my children to thy care. I know that I received them from God and that it is to Him they belong: therefore I beg of thee the grace ever to submit cheerfully to whatever divine Providence may decree concerning them. Vouchsafe to bless them. In their behalf, I ask above all for the kingdom of God and His justice and to thee, good Mother, I leave all care of providing us with what is necessary and benefiting to our state of life. Imprint a great horror of sin on the hearts of my children; keep them aloof from all evil, preserve them from being contaminated by the world; may all their actions be inspired by Christian principles; grant them simplicity and uprightness of heart, teach them to love God alone, even as from her very earliest years thou didst teach thy holy and immaculate Daughter Mary to love Him. Holy Anne, thou art the Mirror of patience, obtain for me the grace of patiently and lovingly surmounting the difficulties inseparable from the task of bringing up children. Bless me and my children; watch over us, good Mother, obtain for us the grace of always loving thee together with Jesus and Mary, so that we may live conformably to the spirit of God, and when this life shall be ended, may have the happiness of being to thee for all eternity. Amen.

Prayer to Saint Anne for the Conversion of One Dearly Beloved

Good Saint Anne, consoler of the afflicted, my heart is heavy with grief on beholding the evil courses of one so dear to me. This beloved soul is dead, dead to God and to heaven, dead to a happy eternity. Dear Good Saint Anne, I rely on thy powerful intercession. Alas! one day this soul may be buried in the depths of hell and we can then never have the consolation of being together in heaven. This terrible thought is present to me day and night, and I weep incessantly when I think of being eternally separated one from another. Dear Mother Saint Anne, have pity on this beloved soul; remind thy grandson Jesus of how much He has suffered for it, and then certainly He will bring it forth from the depths of indifference and sin. Good Saint Anne, I humbly beseech thee, obtain me this favor. Amen.

Prayer to Saint Anne on Behalf of a Sick Person

Beloved Saint Anne, so justly called the mother of the afflicted, turn thine eyes of pity toward the dear infirm one in whom I take so deep an interest. Deign, in thy motherly bounty, to lessen the sufferings of illness; vouchsafe to implore from God complete restoration to health, and with health also the holy resolution henceforth to honor Jesus, Mary, and thyself by the faithful observance of all Christian duties. Amen. So I hope; so may it be.

Prayer to Saint Anne

Beloved of Jesus, Mary and Joseph! Mother of the Queen of Heaven, take us, and all who are dear to us, under thy special care. Obtain for us the virtues thou didst instill into the heart of her who was destined to become the Mother of God, and the graces with which thou wast endowed.

Sublime model of Christian womanhood! pray that we may imitate thy example in our homes and families, listen to our petitions, and obtain our requests. Guardian of the infancy and childhood of the most Blessed Virgin Mary, obtain the graces necessary for all who enter the marriage state, that imitating thy virtues they may sanctify their homes, and lead the souls entrusted to their care to eternal glory. Amen.

approved by
His Eminence, Cardinal James Gibbons,
Archbishop of Baltimore, Maryland,
Feast of Saint Anne,
26 July 1893

Solemn Prayer in Honor of Saint Anne

Priest: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

People: Amen.

Priest and People: With a heart full of sincere filial veneration, I prostrate myself before thee, O blessed Saint Anne. Thou art that beloved and privileged creature who, because of thy extraordinary virtue and sanctity, didst deserve of God that chief of graces, of giving life to the treasury of grace, the blessed among women, the Mother of the incarnate Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Ah! in consideration of such exalted favors deign, O most tender saint, to receive me among the number of thy truly devoted servants, for such I profess myself to be and wish to remain for the rest of my life. Surround me with thy efficacious patronage, and obtain for me from God, the imitation of those virtues with which thou wert so profusely adorned. Obtain for me a knowledge of my sins and sorrow for them, an ardent love for Jesus and Mary, a faithful and constant observance of the duties of my state of life. Save me from all dangers in life, and assist me at the hour of my death, that I may safely reach paradise, there to praise with thee, most happy mother, the Word of God made man in the womb of thy most pure daughter, the Blessed Virgin Mary. Amen.

Priest: Pray for us, Saint Anne.

People: That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray

Priest and People: O Almighty and eternal God, Who didst vouchsafe to choose Saint Anne to bring into the world the Mother of Thy only Son, mercifully grant to us, we beseech Thee, who devoutly honor her memory, grace to obtain through her merits, the blessings of eternal life, Who lives and reigns, world without end.

People: Amen.

Universal Prayer to Saint Anne

Glorious and holy queen, whom the heavens admire, whom the saints honor, and the earth reveres, God the Father loves thee as the mother of His beloved daughter; the Son of God loves thee for having given Him a mother, from whom He took His life and became Saviour of mankind; the Holy Ghost loves thee for having given to Him so beautiful, so worthy, and so perfect a spouse; the angels and the elect honor thee as the mother of their sovereign; the just, the penitent, and the sinner consider thee their powerful advocate before God, for by thy intercession the just hope for an increase of grace, the penitent for their justification, and sinners for the remission of their sins. Be, then, kind and generous, and while we invoke thee here below pray for us in heaven. Use in our favor the great influence thou hast before God, Mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary and permit not that those who know thee be lost. Show thyself always the refuge of sinners and the asylum of the guilty, the consolation of the afflicted, and give us the pledge of thy kindness. Defend our cause now and at the hour of our death. This we pray of thee by all the love which thou hast for Our Lord and for His Mother, thy daughter, that thus sustained by thy prayers we may one day possess eternal life. Amen.

Daily Prayer to Saint Anne

O blessed Mother Saint Anne, comfort of the afflicted and refuge of the dying, I, thy unworthy servant, confiding in thy maternal goodness, choose thee, with Saint Joachim and Saint Joseph, to be my special patroness at the hour of my death. I humbly ask thee to receive me as thy client, and at that dreadful hour to assist me, that I may die in the grace of God, and be admitted to eternal life. Amen.

Prayer to the Blessed Virgin in Honor of Saint Anne

Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Thy grace be with me. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed be Saint Anne, thy mother, from whom thou didst proceed without stain of sin, O Virgin Mary! Of thee was born Jesus Christ, Son of the living God. Amen.

The Invalid's Prayer to Saint Anne

Merciful and beloved Saint Anne, being by the grace of God a Christian, I know I should ask, and by this prayer I sincerely do ask the health of my soul rather than that of my body, convinced as I am that this transitory life is only given us to secure for us a better one hereafter, to which we can only arrive by the grace of God. This grace, together with the grace of patiently bearing my sufferings, I earnestly beg to obtain through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, the intercession of His Immaculate Mother, and through thy powerful mediation, O glorious and good Saint Anne. But not in vain, O beloved Patroness, has the Almighty bestowed upon thee the power to work wonders. Wherefore I beseech thee. O kind Mother, to restore me to health, if it be God's holy Will. Amen.

Pledge of Devotion to Saint Anne

O good and merciful Saint Anne, I purpose to serve thee with singular devotion; to consecrate myself to thy service, and to gain the hearts of others to thy worship and to that confidence in thee which thou dost merit. I choose thee, after the Blessed Virgin, as my spiritual mother and protectress before God; I consecrate myself to serving thee faithfully. To thee I confide my body, my soul, all my spiritual and temporal interests, as well as those of my family. To thee I consecrate my mind that in all things it may be enlightened by faith; my heart, that thou mayest keep it pure and filled with love for Jesus, Mary, Joseph and thyself; my will, that like thine, it may always be in union with the will of God. Obtain for me, O powerful Saint Anne, victory over my passions, avoidance of all occasions of sin, the grace of never offending God, of fulfilling the duties of my state of life, and of exercising all those virtues which are needful for my salvation.

Like thee, may I be all God's in life and in death; and after having loved and honored thee on earth, beloved Good Saint Anne, like a truly faithful and devoted child, may I one day be admitted to glorify thee in heaven, with the angels and the saints. Amen.

Prayer to Saint Anne

O glorious Saint Anne, safe refuge of the afflicted and distressed, encouraged by the wonderful favors and graces which God bestows upon those who piously invoke thy intercession, I come to thee this day with a contrite and hopeful heart. I pour forth my prayer to thee; I implore thy aid, thy protection, thy counsel, and thy blessing. Obtain for me, I beseech thee, my request, provided it be not opposed to the will of God and the welfare of my soul. Should such, however, be the case, obtain for me such other favors as will be conducive to my spiritual and temporal welfare, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Prayer to Saint Anne

Holy Saint Ann, my glorious patron, behold me humbly prostrate at thy feet, to honor thee and implore thy help, in order to obtain by thy intercession from Jesus, the dear Son of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, thy most beloved daughter, the graces necessary for my sanctification in the state of life in which providence has placed me.

Obtain for me, I beseech thee, a holy fear of God, that I may never offend Him by sin; a tender and solid piety that I may always fulfill with fervor all my Christian duties; patience in sickness, and in the daily trials of life, that they may be for me an abundant source of merits. Plant in my heart that lovely charity that will enable me to forgive all and suffer everything for the love of God. Remove from me everything dangerous to my soul, and strengthen me that, encouraged by thy example, I may be an edifying wife and a good mother, and that I may serve God with fidelity, loving him above all things.

Since I am prostrate at thy feet for help, permit me, O, good patroness, to speak to thee in behalf of those who are dear to me. Guard with thy protecting hand the days of my husband, and preserve his health. Grant that he may serve God with fidelity, never having the misfortune to fall into those sins which degrade man and ruin families and immortal souls. Oh, that he may keep the faith and be a model to his children by his exemplary piety, his sweetness and his love of religion.

God has given me children that I may bring them up in his service and for his glory, as thou didst bring up the Virgin Mary. Thou knowest, O, great saint, that I need assistance to fulfill this glorious and all important mission. I confide my

children to thee; preserve their innocence and purity of heart, in order that, like thy Holy Daughter, they may be docile and obedient; that they may love and serve God, and never lose his holy fear; that their lips may never utter a lie, and that sweetness and charity may always animate their lives.

Before ending my prayer, I ask thee, O Good and Holy Saint Ann, to preserve my family in union and in peace, procuring for it all the blessings and helps necessary for its welfare. My confidence in thee is unbounded. I hope to obtain all I have prayed for, relying on thy tenderness and thy great power with Mary and Jesus, Amen.

Prayer of the Childless Spouse

Oh, holy Saint Anne, patroness of married life, to thee I turn in my trial and difficulty. Thou, who suffered the same affliction of sterility, canst understand and sympathize with me, in my sorrow. Thou didst bear the same cross for over twenty years; thou knowest how my heart yearns for the gift of a child to crown our married life with joy and fulfillment, to bring souls into the world to glorify God and people heaven. Help me to join my prayers to thine in humility and trust, that, if necessary, God may grant even a miracle in my favour. If this be not His holy will obtain for me a resignation, humble and sincere, as thine own, confessing in my heart that God knowest best and that His holy will is the sweetest thing of all. Amen.

The Five Perogatives of Saint Anne

1. Rejoice, O blessed Anne, for you did conceive a daughter who is the Mother of the Saviour of the world! (Gloria Patri, 'Glory be to the Father' et cetera).

2. Rejoice, O blessed Anne, mother of the Queen of Heaven, for from you proceeded the bright shining Star of the Sea! (Gloria Patri, 'Glory be to the Father' et cetera).

3. Rejoice, O blessed Anne, mother of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, who ever a Virgin, is at the same time the Mother of the Redeemer. (Gloria Patri, 'Glory be to the Father' et cetera).

4. Rejoice, O blessed Anne, who alone did merit the grace of being the mother of Mary, and grand-parent of Jesus Christ. (Gloria Patri, 'Glory be to the Father' et cetera).

5. Rejoice, O blessed Anne, exult and be glad unceasingly, that you have been so privileged by God! Plead for me with Mary, your most pure daughter, the august Queen of Heaven.

(Gloria Patri, 'Glory be to the Father' et cetera).

Verse. Pray for us, Saint Anne.

Response. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us Pray.

O God, Who did will that Saint Anne by being the mother of Mary, the Ever Blessed Virgin, should co-operate in the work of the Redemption of Your Only-Begotten Son, grant we

beseech You, that while on earth, we may so venerate the Mother of Your Son, and her Mother, Saint Anne, that at the hour of death we may rejoice in their assistance and praise and bless You forever in Heaven. We ask this through Christ Our Lord.

Amen.

Beads of Saint Anne, Mother of Mary

Origin

The Little Chaplet of Saint Anne dates from 1875, and is the pious invention of a devout client of our Saint. If his name is unknown to man, he is surely known to God and dear to Good Saint Anne, for these beads have been the beginning of a chain of blessings, spiritual and temporal. Many graces and favors have been obtained through their recitation.

Explanation and signification

The Little Chaplet of Saint Anne is composed of three Our Fathers and fifteen Hail Marys and is divided into three parts; the first part, one Our Father and five Hail Marys, is said in honor of Jesus, the Author of Grace; the second in honor of Mary, the channel through which all graces come to us from Jesus; the third in honor of Saint Anne, our advocate.

Manner of reciting

Make the sign of the cross; then kiss devoutly the medal of Saint Anne saying the prayer: Jesus, Mary, Anne. While reciting the first part thank Jesus for His favors, ask pardon for sins and future favors. While reciting the second part praise Mary and ask her to present your petition to Saint Anne. The third part is a petition to the good Saint Anne. Each group is concluded with a Glory be as an act of praise to the Blessed Trinity.

The Little Rosary of Saint Anne

This little rosary consists in reciting the following group of prayers three times - the first in honor of Jesus; the second time in honor of Mary, and the third time in honor of Saint Anne -

Once: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Five times: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. Jesus, Mary, Joseph, Good Saint Anne, hear our prayers and grant our requests. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Once: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Novenas



Novena Prayer to Saint Anne

O most holy and august Saint Anne, Heaven admires you, earth blesses you, God the Father loves you as the mother of His cherished daughter, the Incarnate Word as the parent of His well-beloved mother, the Holy Spirit as the mother of His perfect Spouse. The angels and the elect honour you as the tree producing a flower, the heavenly perfume and beauty of which charms them, and whose divine fruit is their life and felicity. Penitent sinners look on you as their most powerful advocate with God, the just through your intercession hope for an increase of grace, penitents the expiation of their sins, and sinners the remission of their iniquities. Be propitious to us, O most merciful Saint Anne, unite with Mary, your dear and admirable child, and by her intercession and yours we shall confidently expect mercy from Jesus, to whom you were so intimately allied, also the intentions of this novena, and every grace during life, and above all at the hour of death. Amen.

Novena Prayer to Saint Anne

(for a special favor)

Glorious Saint Anne, I desire to honor you with a special devotion. I choose you, after the Blessed Virgin, as my spiritual mother and protectress. To you I entrust my soul and my body, all my spiritual and temporal interests, as well as those of my family. To you I consecrate my mind that in all things it may be enlightened by faith; my heart that you may keep it pure and fill it with love for Jesus, Mary, Joseph, and yourself; my will, that like yours, it may always be one with the Will of God.

Good Saint Anne, filled with love for those who invoke you and with compassion for those who suffer, I confidently place before you my earnest petition.

(Mention your request.)

I beg you to recommend my petition to your daughter, the Blessed Virgin Mary, that both Mary and you may present it to Jesus. Through your earnest prayers may my request be granted. But if what I ask for should not be according to the Will of God, obtain for me that which will be for the greater benefit of my soul. By the power and the grace with which God has blessed you, extend to me your helping hand.

But most of all, merciful Saint Anne, I beg you to help me to master my evil inclinations and temptations, and to avoid all occasions of sin. Obtain for me the grace of never offending God, of fulfilling faithfully all the duties of my state of life, and of practicing all those virtues which are needful for my salvation.

Like you, may I belong to God in life and in death through perfect love. And after having loved and honored you on earth as a truly devoted child, may I, through your prayers, have the privilege of loving and honoring you in heaven with the angels and saints throughout eternity. Amen.

Good Saint Anne, mother of her who is our life, our sweetness and our hope, pray to her for me and obtain my request (*three times*).

Novena to Saint Anne, Grandmother of Jesus

First Day - Grandmother of Jesus

Good Saint Anne, I venerate and love you as the Grandmother of Jesus. This title is the foundation of all the other privileges which surround you with glory. God has decided that the world was to be restored to the life of grace by the Word of God made Man. From all eternity your daughter had been chosen as the Mother of this Redeemer. Mary is truly our Co-Redemptress. Your blood flowed in Mary's veins, and hence also in those of Jesus.

I offer you my praises in union with all Catholics throughout the world, who are brothers of Jesus - children, like Him, of your daughter Mary. God willed to come so close to us as to be one of us in the flesh through you. Now we are the brothers by grace of Him who is your Grandson by nature; so we are as it were your grandchildren for we all belong to the family of God. As such we offer you our reverence and love. Accept, dear mother, our prayers and devotion.

Good Saint Anne, I greet you as a favorite saint in heaven and on earth. God the Father loves you as the mother of His beloved daughter Mary. God the Son loves you for having given Him a mother through whom He became Man and the Savior of the world. God the Holy Spirit loves you for having given Him so beautiful and worthy a spouse. The angels and the saints in heaven honor you as the Mother of their Queen. The just and sinners turn to you as to their powerful advocate before God, and by your intercession they hope for grace and forgiveness.

Loving Saint Anne, your Grandson Jesus considers the slightest wish of His grandmother as an order to be carried out with love and devotion. He is limited by no human weakness in doing so. Being almighty, He is able and willing to fulfill your requests. Be kind and gracious to us all, and intercede in our behalf. Use in our favor the great influence you have before God and your most blessed daughter. Do not allow us who honor you to lose our souls, but show yourself always the refuge of sinners and the consolation of the afflicted. Plead our cause before God now and at the hour of our death. This we beg of you by all the love which you have for Our Lord, your Grandson, and for His mother, your glorious daughter, that thus aided by your prayers we may one day reach eternal life and praise God together with you forever. Amen.

Good Saint Anne, Grandmother of Jesus, pray for us.

Second Day - Mother of the Mother of God

Good Saint Anne, I venerate and love you as the mother of the Mother of God. How patiently you and your husband, Saint Joachim, bore the trial of being childless, for which you were despised by your own people. But God heard your prayer, and in your old age favored you with the greatest blessing ever bestowed on an earthly union. In your womb the Virgin Mary was conceived without original sin. You gave flesh to her who was to give a human nature to the Son of God through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Glorious Saint Anne, I praise you as the noblest of mothers, for you prepared in your womb the body which was made worthy to be a dwelling place for the Son of God. You brought forth the most lovable of the daughters of Eve who was full of grace, the blessed one among all women of the world, who gave flesh to the Son of God. The mother of God

is your daughter. God's own Son is your Grandson. In this lies your own great dignity, and for this I congratulate you. I honor and love you with all my heart. Saint Anne, you were privileged to satisfy the earliest wants of Mary and to watch over her infancy. You worked together with the Holy Spirit in the education of her soul to prepare her for the highest vocation ever given to a woman - to be the mother of God's own Son. You presented her to the Lord in the temple at the age of three, and, according to your promise, consecrated her to the service of God. You rejoiced at Mary's share in the redemption as the mother of the Divine Redeemer. And when, after her glorious Assumption into Heaven, she crossed the heavenly courts to accept her heavenly glory, you received from the angels and saints the honors due to you as her mother. And now you will enjoy for all eternity the tender love and unsurpassed glory of your loving daughter Mary.

Good Saint Anne, recommend me to your glorious daughter, and pray to her for me, for she refuses none of your requests. May she look down with tender compassion upon me for I have confidence in the fact that I love and serve you, her mother. Beg her to obtain for me the graces I need to keep from sin and to keep from losing the grace of God, that my heart may ever remain His holy dwelling. May she obtain salvation for me from her divine Son through her most powerful intercession, that after having served my God with all the love of my heart in this world, I may deserve to be rewarded with the possession of Him in heaven for all eternity. Amen.

Good Saint Anne, Mother of God, pray for us.

Third Day - Mother of My Heavenly Mother

Good Saint Anne, I venerate and love you as the mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God. At the Incarnation your loving daughter became likewise the Mother of men. She conceived Jesus, the Head of a Mystical Body whose members we are. She also conceived His members who have been born again by grace and have become one with Him spiritually. When she became the mother of Jesus according to the flesh, she became the mother of men according to the spirit.

This truth was confirmed on Calvary, when at the very moment our Redemption was to be completed by the death of Jesus, He said to Mary: "Behold thy son"; then to Saint John, who took our place beneath the cross: "Behold thy mother." Thus Mary brought us forth spiritually on Calvary and has become our spiritual mother. I thank you, Saint Anne, for such a mother.

I believe that Mary is not only our mother, but also the Mediatrix of All Graces, and that God has willed that His aid should reach us through her. He wished to adapt Himself to our nature by giving us life and aid through the heart of a mother. Having placed in her heart some of His own love for mankind to make her the spiritual mother of the redeemed, He shows us more of His own love and mercy through that same motherly heart. Give me a great confidence in that motherly heart, and entrust to it all my needs and problems.

Good Saint Anne, I want you to offer me to God as you offered your loving daughter Mary. Make me in some way more like her, that my whole life may be pleasing to God. As Mary was the way by which God came to man, so in God's plans she is the way by which man goes back to God. I abandon myself completely to your motherly guidance, that you may lead me to Mary, and through Mary to Jesus and to God.

I beg you, good Saint Anne, to give me a tender love, unbounded confidence, and a childlike devotion to your glorious daughter, the Blessed Virgin Mary, for she was given to me as mother by Jesus, my Savior. I also thank you for giving me so wonderful a mother. Make me believe of Mary what the Church believes of her, and love her as the Church loves her, more and more as Jesus and you love her. May she be for me the "Morning Star" on my journey through life, the "Mother of Mercy" in my sinfulness, and finally the "Gate of Heaven" at the hour of my death.

Good Saint Anne, Mother of my heavenly Mother, pray for us.

Fourth Day - Model of Virtue

Great Saint Anne, Model of Christian virtue, I come to beg the aid of your prayers that I may always lead a truly holy life. Obtain for me the virtues which you have so faithfully practiced and which you have taught your daughter Mary, who was destined to become the mother of God.

There is nothing that you want more than to see me perfectly dedicated to God as Mary was. My salvation depends upon my living up to the promises of my baptism. Help me to be faithful to these holy vows by which I have renounced Satan, his works and false glory, and have pledged my loyalty to God. Keep me a great distance from sin and all its occasions.

Good Saint Anne, be my guide, my friend, my counsellor, my guardian and my intercessor before God. Fill my soul with wisdom and knowledge of the teachings of Christ. Sanctify me in the grace of God which I hope to obtain through your prayers to Jesus, the Source of all graces, and to your daughter Mary, the Mediatrix of All Graces.

Good Saint Anne, through your powerful intercession with Jesus and Mary obtain for me the grace:

To look at myself just as I am, in the spirit of true humility.

To look at life as it really is. Never let me forget that this world will pass away while the next is eternal and that my greatest duty is to give glory to God and to save my soul.

To see the hand of God's Providence in all that happens, and with confidence to abandon myself to His loving guidance.

To love God above all things and find delight in Him alone, and for His sake love my neighbor and His creatures.

To listen to the inspiration of God's grace, to promote His glory among men, and to work always with Him and for Him.

To love Jesus Christ and His most Blessed Mother with a deep personal love, and to endeavor to live in constant union with Them.

To live a truly holy life, to die a happy death and to possess God for all eternity in heaven. Amen.

Good Saint Anne, model of Virtue, pray for us.

Fifth Day - Help of the Church

Great Patriarch, Saint Joachim, and good Saint Anne, deserving by your singular virtue to be chosen by divine Providence to give to the world that immaculate Queen, in whom all nations were to be blessed, and who, in her virginal bosom, was to bear the Savior of the human race; we who are your devout clients rejoice with you in this your great privilege, and implore you to extend your special protection to ourselves and our families.

Dear Saints, do not let the devil and sin find a place in our hearts, nor the false wisdom of the world to lead us astray. Do not permit us to live unmindful of eternity, for which we have been created. Obtain for us from God a firm and unshaken faith, that we may oppose the wickedness and errors which are ever being spread abroad by the enemies of Holy Church and the Apostolic See. Give us a sincere and constant devotion to the Vicar of Jesus Christ, the Roman Pontiff, and an unfailing courage in answering lies against those things which are most sacred and venerable in our holy religion.

You are powerful because of the love which your holy daughter Mary bears toward you. Assist the cause of the Church. Gain for her the victory for which she sighs, scatter the powers of darkness, destroy their pride, and grant that the light of the true Faith may shine brightly in all minds.

Grant us, above all, a tender and childlike devotion to your beloved daughter and our Mother, Mary most holy, so that we, honoring her daily with our devout homage, may be made worthy to be numbered among her children. And after the miseries of this exile, may we be brought to praise and bless the mercy of God forever in heaven. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be. (Three times.)

O Joachim, husband of holy Anne, father of the merciful Virgin, bring us, your servants, help for our salvation.

Good Saint Anne, Help of the Church, pray for us.

Sixth Day - Support of Christian Families

Good Saint Anne, beloved of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, mother of the Queen of Heaven, I venerate you as the patroness and support of Christian families. How deeply were you devoted

to your husband, Saint Joachim, with holy, chaste, and constant love. With what zealous care you watched over and trained your little daughter, the Blessed Virgin Mary, that she might become the beloved daughter of the heavenly Father, the mother of His Divine Son, and the bride of the Holy Spirit. How pleasing to God was your offering of Mary in the temple at the tender age of three.

As guardian of the infancy and childhood of the most blessed Virgin Mary, you showed the sanctity and dignity of labor to be an expression of God's will. But even more, it pointed to the need of religion as the foundation for happy family life. I thank God for the fatherly care and kindness with which He has blessed your union with Saint Joachim, and led the marriage bond back to its original purity, and filled it with such graces that from it there could come forth that stainless blossom of mankind - Mary, the virgin mother of God.

You lived a simple, holy and God-fearing life in the married state. Prayer and work, zeal, peace, and love, reigned in your household. There the holy angels dwelt with you, and the infinite God looked down with pleasure upon you. From your favored family has come forth a stream of blessings that has filled the whole world. Obtain for all who enter the married state the graces they need, that imitating your virtues, they may sanctify their homes, and lead the souls entrusted to their care to eternal glory.

Good Saint Anne, patroness and support of Christian families, the refuge and consolation of all in need, I, together with my whole family, choose you as our mother, patroness, and intercessor before God. We consecrate ourselves to you with childlike love and confidence, and we beg you, mother of Our Lady and grandmother of Jesus, to receive us among

the number of your clients, and to take us under your special protection.

Grant through your great love for Jesus and Mary that we may at last reach heaven, where our entire family will again be reunited, there to praise, love and thank God together with ybu for all eternity. Amen.

Good Saint Anne, Support of Christian families, pray for us.

Seventh Day - Model of Christian Mothers

Good Saint Anne, how zealously you prepared your daughter Mary for the sublime vocation of her divine motherhood! How tenderly you loved and guarded your divine grandson Jesus! You show the same tenderness and love for your grandchildren of the human race. You are, therefore, after Mary, the best model and help of Christian mothers.

Loving Saint Anne, Model of Christian mothers, I entrust the mothers of the world to your tender care. Help them to understand the great dignity of parenthood and its grave responsibility. Enable them to realize that they are co-sharers with God in bringing a human being into existence; that they are entrusted with the salvation of the souls of their children; that theirs is the mission of fashioning young hearts and minds according to the divine Model, Christ. Indeed, mothers enjoy, with the priesthood, the greatest ministry in the world - the education of the conscience and the training of souls.

Help mothers, in imitation of you, to fulfill all their obligations as good Christian mothers should, and to influence their children more by their good example than by their words. Obtain for them the grace of bringing up their children with loving patience and gentle understanding. Teach them ways and means of leading their children closer

to God, so that the temporal and eternal happiness of those entrusted to them may be assured. Let them submit cheerfully to whatever divine Providence may decree concerning them.

Mother of Mary and grandmother of Jesus, I beg of you in the name of all Christian mothers, be the kind protectress and loving guardian of all the children of the world. Teach them to be subject to their parents and obedient to their guidance. Help them to imitate Mary in keeping the Fourth Commandment of God by loving and respecting their parents.

Good Saint Anne, model of Christian mothers, beg your loving daughter Mary, the Queen of Mothers, to bless all mothers and the children they have brought into the world, that all, both mothers and children, may glorify God and reach eternal life. Amen.

Saint Anne, model of Christian mothers, pray for us.

Eighth Day - Health of the Sick

Good Saint Anne, you are justly called the Health of the Sick, Mother of the infirm, and the Cure of those who suffer from disease. For centuries the Catholics of the whole world have acknowledged your power as a healer. The afflicted from everywhere may be seen at your shrines begging your help.

Filled with the same confidence in you, I now plead for the sick and the infirm of the entire world. I entrust to your care all those who suffer in hospitals and in sick-rooms. I recommend to you in particular (*mention your sick*).

Loving Saint Anne, whose kind heart is ever ready to sympathize with the miseries of mankind, extend your

gentle hand of mercy in the aid of the sick and infirm. Lessen their pains, comfort them in their sorrows, strengthen them in their trials. Help them to sanctify their sufferings by patience and love and complete submission to the holy will of God. Make them faithful in the performance of their duties to God and their neighbor. Enable them to unite their sufferings with those of Jesus crucified and the Mother of Sorrows. Finally, if it should please God, obtain for them the health they so earnestly desire, that they may ever glorify God for His tender mercy toward them.

Good Saint Anne, since God has given you the power to work wonders for those who are sick and infirm, look upon me in my present need, which I humbly present to you (*mention it*).

If God should want me to continue carrying my cross, help me to bear it with patience, love and resignation, in imitation of the sufferings of Jesus and the sorrows of Mary. Enlighten my mind that I may understand that suffering is a very important means of sanctifying my soul, and of reaping a plentiful harvest of merit for Heaven. Consoler of the afflicted, give me consolation and strength in every trial. Through your powerful influence over the Heart of Jesus, your divine Grandson, and Mary, your loving daughter, I hope to obtain your help in my present temporal and spiritual needs. Amen.

Good Saint Anne, Health of the Sick, pray for us.

Ninth Day - My Patroness

Good Saint Anne, you are blessed among women, because you had the happiness of bearing in your womb the holy and immaculate Virgin Mary, Mother of God. I congratulate you on the joy you felt in giving birth to her and offering her in

the temple to the Eternal Father. I beg you, good mother, to present me to your loving daughter and to her Son, Jesus. Be my advocate and protectress with Jesus and Mary, for if I am fortunate enough to find favor with you, holy mother Anne, I may expect everything from your intercession. Such is my hope.

Good Saint Anne, I choose you, after the Blessed Virgin, as my spiritual mother and protectress. Through the hands of your immaculate daughter Mary, receive the consecration of my whole being which I make to you this day, in order that henceforth, at every moment of my life and in each of my actions, you may deign to be my mother, my guide, and my intercessor.

Saint Anne, I consecrate to you my body with its senses, and I beg of you to help me to use them for the greater glory of God. I consecrate to you my eyes, that they may look only on my Jesus; my ears, that they may be attentive only to the divine inspirations of the Holy Spirit; all my senses. that they may serve me only to love God and to sacrifice myself for Him.

I consecrate to you my soul with all its faculties: my memory, that it may be mindful only of God's beauty, and of the words, actions, and Passion of my Jesus; my heart with all its affections, that, attracted alone by the delights of God's love, it may ever find in Him peace, love, strength, light, and lasting happiness. Help me to love God more each day, and to make Him loved by many souls. Make me, and all those whom I love, holy and pleasing to God.

Good Saint Anne, I abandon myself entirely to your loving care. I wish to imitate the virtues you practiced in your lifetime. Pray for me, that I may be formed by the Holy Spirit, with Mary and in Mary, according to the model of my Jesus.

Dear Saint Anne, holy mother of Mary, be my refuge and my consolation in life and in death. Obtain for me generosity in the service of God, and by your maternal intercession lead me to heaven. Amen.

Good Saint Anne, my Patroness, pray for us.

Public Novena to Saint Anne

Great Saint Anne, enthroned in glory.
Powerful Saint in heaven above,
Plead for us thy needy children.
Fill our hearts with God's sweet love.

Good Saint Anne, O hear our prayer;
Good Saint Anne, O hear our prayer;
Guard us from all sin and danger,
Keep us in thy loving care.

Priest: In the name of the father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

People: Amen.

Priest: Come, O Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, and kindle in them the fire of Thy love. Send forth Thy Spirit and they shall be created.

People: And Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

Priest: Let us pray. O God, Who didst instruct the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us in the same Spirit to be truly wise, and ever to rejoice in His consolation. Though Jesus Christ Our Lord.

People: Amen.

Priest and People: O Almighty and Eternal God, look down with favor upon us who are assembled here to glorify Thy servant Saint Anne. Be pleased to accept the homage which we offer Thee in her name. And in Thy goodness answer the prayers which we present to Thee through her powerful

intercession. As she pleased Thee on earth by her virtuous life, so listen to the request which she now makes for us before Thy throne in heaven. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

O Lord Jesus Christ, Who hast said: "Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you," graciously hear our prayers, and grant that what we ask with confidence, we may receive through the intercession of her who brought into the world Thy Mother, the Immaculate Queen of Heaven. Amen. Our Father. Hail Mary. Glory be. Good Saint Anne, Mother of her who is our life, our sweetness and our hope, pray to her for us and obtain our request (*three times*).

To kneel at thine altar in faith we draw near,
Led onward by Mary thy daughter so dear.

To all who invoke thee thou lendest an ear;
Thou soothest the sorrows of all who draw near.

As suppliants we come here to kneel at thy feet;
O grant what we ask thee if for us it is meet.

Novena to Saint Anne, by Father Daniel Aloysius Lord

First Day

"Who shall find a valiant woman?"

This was the cry of Solomon long before the time of the noble women who watched for Christ's coming to earth.

The valiant woman strong in her stainless virtue.

The valiant woman keeping the laws and traditions of her people.

The valiant woman fighting the quiet battle of purity and decency.

The valiant woman protecting her home, the strength of her husband, the future of her children.

The valiant woman whom God loves and whom the powers of evil dread as their relentless enemy.

The valiant woman like glorious Saint Anne, mother of Mary.

To Saint Anne the Catholic world has looked in admiration, has reached out in confidence; from her have come protection and generous love. To the grandmother of Christ we pray:

The Prayer of Saint Anne

O God, who did vouchsafe to endow blessed Anne with such grace that she was found worthy to be the mother of her

who brought forth Your only-begotten Son, grant in Your mercy that we who keep her festival may be aided by her intercession with You. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.

Second Day

It was in the peaceful little house of Anne and Joachim that Mary, the Mother of God, spent her girlhood.

There Mary knew the example of a woman who lived the simple ways of wife and mother.

Unknown save in the limited circle of Nazareth, Anne prepared the meals for her family, made and mended their plain garments, and filled the house with the perfume of her devoted service. She was a model of a wife's diligence and a mother's solicitude.

The young Mary watched this model of the simple domestic virtues.

This obedient daughter saw perfection in her mother, the perfection of small tasks done out of love for God and devotion to family.

Each day had a time for prayer.

Each day was filled with deeds of neighbourliness and acts of charity quietly and happily performed.

Mary saw in her mother how a woman can be simple yet great, how the deeds that God asks of us - however unnoticed or unimportant these may be - are the deeds that win His gratitude and make us saints before Him and benefactors before the world.

To this model of the simple domestic virtues we pray:

The Prayer of Saint Anne

O God, who did vouchsafe to endow blessed Anne with such grace that she was found worthy to be the mother of her who brought forth Your only-begotten Son, grant in Your mercy that we who keep her festival may be aided by her intercession with You. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.

Third Day

Like all Jewish women of her day Anne dreamed of the promised Saviour. Surely the Messiah was sorely needed in her day when the plight of her people was so unhappy.

Never for a moment did she think that such an honour would come to her - but perhaps from her line, the noble line of David, there would come a woman worthy to be the Mother of the Messiah.

To Anne was not given the beautiful privilege of motherhood - for so long so it seemed.

She prayed that God would send her and Joachim a son or a daughter.

Neighbours pitied her, as the Jews always pitied a childless woman. Around her grew up a flock of nieces and nephews. But no child of her own came to rest in her arms.

She prayed for a child, and in the same breath she added: ". . . . if it be your will, my Father."

No impatience with God. No envy of more fortunate relatives. No self-pity. But a hope that never faded. And faith in God, who would do for her what was for His honour and her happiness.

No wonder that to Anne there was born at length in her old age the beautiful little girl who was Mary, fairest flower of womankind.

To this model of hope we pray:

The Prayer of Saint Anne

O God, who did vouchsafe to endow blessed Anne with such grace that she was found worthy to be the mother of her who brought forth Your only-begotten Son, grant in Your mercy that we who keep her festival may be aided by her intercession with You. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.

Fourth Day

Hope is a beautiful virtue.

Hope without prayer is a wasted thing. It is groundless optimism without root in faith.

We hope because we know that God in His love will do what is best for us. We pray so that He may know our desires and that if they are for our good He may fulfill them.

In the long days of patient waiting before the coming of Mary, Anne prayed from a humble and a loving heart.

Her life was a long simple prayer committing her to God's Holy will.

Of a Sabbath she and her husband, Joachim, went together to the synagogue to pray with the other faithful Jews, who cried aloud for the long-delayed Saviour.

At daybreak she offered to God in heaven everything that she would do throughout the day.

Before and after meals she thanked the creator of the universe for the gifts of His Fatherly goodness.

At night she looked back upon the day and presented it as a gift to God.

And always underlying her prayer was the hope that the Saviour would soon be born and that God would send her a child - perhaps the child who would be nurse to the Messiah.

To this model of prayer we pray:

The Prayer of Saint Anne

O God, who did vouchsafe to endow blessed Anne with such grace that she was found worthy to be the mother of her who brought forth Your only-begotten Son, grant in Your mercy that we who keep her festival may be aided by her intercession with You. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.

Fifth Day

Joachim and Anne were coming into late middle age. The hope that they would have children seemed almost past.

Longingly had they prayed for a child. Now they hardly dared hope any longer.

And then the wonder. Anne conceived, and the happy pair knew that they would be parents.

If there had been peace in the house before, now there was deepest joy. God had answered their petitions. God had blessed them with parenthood.

If Anne had hitherto done gladly the simple work of her household, she now did it with new purpose and high happiness. The house must be even more spotless for the coming child. Little dresses must be made, quilts and pillows sewed.

Each Sabbath in the synagogue Anne upon her knees thanked God, who had blessed her.

Each morning and each night she prayed the Father in heaven to bless with the fullness of grace and the richness of a life devoted to His service the child she was to bear.

And Mary, the loveliest infant that the world had ever seen until that day, was born. Anne smiled into the happy eyes of Joachim. Together they loved the little Mary, their gift from God.

To the happy mother of Mary we pray:

The Prayer of Saint Anne

O God, who did vouchsafe to endow blessed Anne with such grace that she was found worthy to be the mother of her who brought forth Your only-begotten Son, grant in Your mercy that we who keep her festival may be aided by her intercession with You. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.

Sixth Day

Who can describe the joy that came to the house of Anne and Joachim with the coming of Mary?

Never had a sweeter baby smiled into a mother's face.

Never had a more obedient child grown up to bring happiness to a household.

Her first spoken words were music in their ears.

Her first conscious kiss was a blessing and the sweet mark of her gratitude to her parents.

She listened avidly to Anne's telling of the story of God's dealings with His people. From Anne she heard for the first time about the Saviour who was to be born.

From Anne she learned the gentle arts that she was later to use as Mother of the Son of God. It was from Anne she learned the dignity of a woman's work.

Now there was laughter in the house, the happy young laughter of a sinless child. The hearts of Anne and Joachim echoed to that laughter in delight and with a sense of gracious fulfillment.

God had been slow to answer their prayers; His answer had come in measure far beyond their fondest hopes. In God's Providence did they put their trust and their trust was not in vain.

To this model set before the child Mary we pray:

The Prayer of Saint Anne

O God, who did vouchsafe to endow blessed Anne with such grace that she was found worthy to be the mother of her who brought forth Your only-begotten Son, grant in Your mercy that we who keep her festival may be aided by her intercession with You. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.

Seventh Day

Was Anne still alive when Mary became the Mother of the Saviour?

Was it ever Anne's grandmotherly privilege to hold the Infant king in her arms?

We do not know. The silence of the Scriptures leads us to think that perhaps she had already gone home to God, that she had left her daughter to the gracious care of Joseph, that she was never to see her divine Grandson until as liberator He entered the limbo of the ancients.

But whether she lived or not to see that happy day, the spirit of her devotedness, her calm serenity, her patience, her kindness lived on in the life of Mary.

It was from Anne that Mary learned the art of motherhood.

What Anne had done for her, Mary did for her little Son.

Food like the food she had eaten at her mother's table Mary prepared for her growing Boy.

The prayers, the lovely story of the Jewish people, the strong words of the law and the prophet's hope-bearing words that she had learned from Anne, her mother, Mary passed on to her Son as He grew in age and wisdom and grace.

The imprint of Anne's training could be seen on the Son of God Himself through Mary, His Blessed Mother.

To this model of motherhood we pray:

The Prayer of Saint Anne

O God, who did vouchsafe to endow blessed Anne with such grace that she was found worthy to be the mother of her who brought forth Your only-begotten Son, grant in Your mercy that we who keep her festival may be aided by her intercession with You. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.

Eighth Day

Next to Mary, Anne is the favourite name for all the world.

It is the symbol of her motherly virtues. It is so intimately associated with Mary and with Jesus that it commands our affection.

Thousands of girl babies each year are named for the mother of Mary.

Time was when the highest honour that could be conferred upon a baby girl was to call her Mary Anne, linking in a double name the virtue and intercession of the world's two most powerful women.

Today that name remains the symbol of strength and power.

We call upon Anne, knowing that the Saviour will listen to the prayers of His devoted grandmother.

In her name we ask favours and blessings, sure that the God who chose her daughter to be His Mother will be generous to the woman who shaped His Mother to her high career.

Fortunate the women whose name is Anne.

Blessed the millions across the world who pray to the great Saint Anne, knowing that her name is dear to God and that prayer to her is prayer that the Saviour, her Grandson, will willingly heed.

To her whose name and fame we love, we pray:

The Prayer of Saint Anne

O God, who did vouchsafe to endow blessed Anne with such grace that she was found worthy to be the mother of her who brought forth Your only-begotten Son, grant in Your mercy that we who keep her festival may be aided by her intercession with You. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.

Ninth Day

All her life Anne lived in the obscure town of Nazareth.

All her days were spent in a tiny house, a home of common people.

Her ancestors might have lived in the royal palaces of David and of his descendants. It was Anne's destiny to know no palaces, to be content with a cottage that was made beautiful chiefly by the love that filled it. But Anne was great.

A thousand, thousand churches are built to her name.

A thousand schools and hospitals are erected under her patronage.

Pilgrims by the millions pour every year into her shrines, kneeling before her altars and begging her to remember them to God.

Unknown in her own day, she is now known across the world.

Having lived during her lifetime in a little cottage, she is now honoured by great buildings of the world.

From her mansion in heaven she looks down to see once more how the buildings that bear her name shelter the Son of God, house the shrines of Mary His Mother, and serve for the peace and strength of God's sons and daughters of every generation.

To her who was honoured on earth and is enthroned in heaven we pray:

The Prayer of Saint Anne

O God, who did vouchsafe to endow blessed Anne with such grace that she was found worthy to be the mother of her who brought forth Your only-begotten Son, grant in Your mercy that we who keep her festival may be aided by her intercession with You. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, world without end. Amen.

Novena in Honor of Saint Anne

First Day - Faith

Faith is the foundation, the source or root of all supernatural life, and of all Christian virtues. Without faith it is impossible to please God, but with it nothing is difficult. Then why should we not have great faith in God, since He is all powerful and everything comes from Him? He has created heaven and earth and everything that is on earth by a mere act of His will. He has created our bodies and infused into them an immortal soul. He is our most generous benefactor, our most loving Father. He has already conferred numberless benefits on us without any prayers or merits of ours. Every moment of our life is marked by His renewed favors towards us. He loves us with a love greater than that of a mother for her own child. "Can a woman forget her infant, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb? And if she should forget, yet will not I forget thee." God has solemnly promised to grant us whatsoever graces we ask; and, being Almighty, He is able to grant us all, even far more than we can ask. He is so willing to bestow His favors on us that He complains of our not asking Him for them: "Hitherto," He says, "you have not asked anything in My name; ask, and you shall receive, that your joy may be full." He even commands us to ask Him for His favors: "Ask, and you shall receive." Therefore God can do anything for us, no matter how hard it may seem, if we only have faith. Then let our faith in God be strong. Let us fully understand, at the very beginning of the novena, that Saint Anne of herself can do nothing for us, because she is strong only in as much as God is with her.

Practice

I will ask Saint Anne to strengthen my faith in God.

Prayer

O! great Saint Anne, I am about to make this novena, in thy honor, and for my own spiritual good. During the coming nine days I will thank God, for the many graces He has given them especially for your great faith. Good Saint Anne, how far am I from resembling thee! My faith is weak. Come to my help and strengthen me; make me strong in the service of God and obtain that I may constantly recall to mind that I was created for heaven and not for earth. I ask above all the salvation of my soul, which is assured to all who pray well and persevere in prayer.

Ejaculation

Good Saint Anne, obtain for me a lively faith.

Second Day - Confidence

Saint Anne seems to be the saint through whose agency it has pleased heaven to confer temporal favors upon man. Her very name, which was inspired by an angel, signifies: gracious or full of mercy. The birth of this heavenly child was a subject of rejoicing for the whole country; far and wide, and during many years, were repeated the marvels which marked her coming forth. Among other prodigies which happened at this time, tradition relates the sudden cure of a knight of Nazareth named Serai, blind from his infancy, who, having repaired to the house of Stollam, fell on his knees beside Saint Anne's cradle and lovingly and confidingly taking her two little hands in his, said to her: "CHILD OF GOD, OPEN MY EYES SO THAT I MAY BEHOLD IN THEE THE WONDERS OF HEAVEN." Immediately he regained the use of his eyesight. From that day this merciful power has been manifesting itself in the world. This is so true that in any part of the world where a shrine has been erected to her

honor and where people have come to pray with faith and confidence, wonderful favors have been recorded at that sanctuary. It is not surprising that it should be so, when we consider that the nearer the saints are to God, the more agreeable they are to Him and the more He loves them. After Saint Joseph, and the Blessed Virgin, none can be nearer to Him than Saint Anne, the mother of Mary. How he must love her and what attention must He not give to her prayers and supplications. We must come to her, in all confidence, and ask her all the things that we may need and be assured that God will grant them, if it be for our greater good and for His greater glory.

Practice

One of the greatest graces we can ask of God, through Saint Anne's intercession, is an unshaken confidence in the promises made by Jesus Christ to prayer.

Prayer

O! Saint Anne, thou whose name signifieth grace and mercy, it was never known that any one who fled to thy protection, implored thy help and sought thy intercession, was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly unto thee, good and kind Mother; before thee I kneel, sinful and sorrowful, O great Saint Anne, Mother of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, despise not my petitions, but hear me and answer my prayer. Amen.

Ejaculation

We fly to thy patronage, ever glorious and blessed Mother, good Saint Anne.

Third Day - Purity of Heart

It is only with a pure heart that we should approach Our Blessed Lord and the saints, with a heart that is at perfect peace with God. Because the man whose heart is not clean is powerless to raise his soul to God, for when he begins to pray, thoughts and images of sin crowd in upon his mind and hold it captive upon earth. He who prays with an impure heart is like a man with mud-stained garments who enters the presence of a king, to implore a favor. It is only just that he who will not conform to the divine precepts should be excluded from a share in the divine benefactions. The moment mortal sin enters into our soul we become the enemies of our Divine Master, and as long as we are in that state we are objects of aversion to Him. Then how can we expect God to do great things for us when we are His enemies? Listen to the commands of God, if you would have Him listen to your supplications. But as soon as the sinner is sincerely contrite, he may hope to obtain a hearing; God will receive his petitions as graciously as if he had never offended. In this He is unlike man, who is prone to cast former offences in the face of those who ask a favor. God looks at the present intention, not at the past action. Remember how the prayer of the penitent publican in the temple was accepted. Therefore, before beginning the novena, let us purify our hearts by a good confession.

Practice

I will avoid the dangerous occasions of sin and live in the presence of God.

Prayer

Great Saint Anne, my life so far has not been what it ought to be. Instead of following God and fulfilling His holy law, I have resisted His grace, so that I must have grieved thee very much, dear Saint Anne. But now is the time of grace

and blessing, now Almighty God will second thy efforts in my behalf. I will turn from my bad habits and lead a better life. Thou, O good Saint Anne, art certainly interested in my eternal welfare. Give me light on my path through this life. It is not always through malice that I commit sin, but frequently from ignorance. If I had the light I would, with the grace of God, do better. Then, great Saint Anne, obtain it for me.

Ejaculations

Great Saint Anne, obtain that I may always abhor and detest sin.

Fourth Day - Confession

Of all the means bestowed by the Saviour of the world for converting sinners, sustaining the just and conducting them to perfection, the most efficacious and most indispensable is confession. By it man learns to know and humble himself, to measure the wounds of his soul and to heal them. In the sacrament of penance he finds light, counsel and fortitude to combat the perverse maxims of the world and the irregular propensities of the heart, to discover the wiles of the enemy of salvation and to elude them, to rise from his falls: nay, even how to profit by his faults. In that sacred laver in which he mingles repentant tears with the blood of the Redeemer, he purifies and sanctifies his soul and recovers the most precious of all wealth - peace with God and with his own conscience. If many persons do not derive fruit from confession, it is because they do not bring to the reception of the sacrament Of penance the requisite dispositions; some do not examine their consciences, others feel no contrition for the past, and adopt no firm resolutions for the future, others dare even to conceal some sins from

their confessors. Unhappy souls, they find death where they ought to find life.

Practice

In order to be a worthy child of Saint Anne, I will approach regularly the tribunal of penance and use the means of salvation there provided and taught me.

Prayer

Pray for me, O holy Saint Anne, that I may make a good confession. Having bewailed my sins and past transgressions, I beg of thee to obtain for me from God a true conversion, that I may be a new man and a man of God. Almighty God, according to his ordinances, expects that I shall make a good confession, that I shall tell my sins plainly to a priest so that I may obtain their forgiveness. Effect in me a firm purpose of amendment, so that beginning once more a new life I may persevere to the end.

Ejaculation

Saint Anne, obtain for me the full remission of my sins and the salvation of my soul.

Fifth Day - Communion

In the holy Eucharist, Jesus imparts to us the most precious gift He can bestow. Having to depart from this world after He had completed our redemption, our loving Saviour would not leave us desolate, therefore he bequeathed to us His own most precious body and blood in the Sacrament of the Altar. His mortal life had been one uninterrupted evidence of charity towards men; but not satisfied with this, not contented even with shedding the last drop of His blood for our salvation, He determined, when the hour of His return to

the Father had arrived, to leave us another and a stronger pledge of His devoted love. The same night on which He was betrayed, He took bread, and giving thanks, broke, and said to His disciples, "Take ye and eat, this is my body." And taking the chalice, He gave it to them, saying "Drink ye all of this, for this is My blood which shall be shed for the remission of sins."

At the very time that men prepared for Him scourges, thorns and a cross to crucify Him, our compassionate Redeemer wished to leave us the last proof of His love. Saint Augustine, when considering the greatness of the gift which the Saviour makes to us in the holy Eucharist, declares that Jesus, though an Omnipotent God, has nothing more valuable to give. "Of all the sacraments," says Saint Liguori, "the Adorable Sacrament of the Altar is the most excellent. The other sacraments contain the gifts of God, but the holy Eucharist contains God Himself. The principal effect of this sacrament is to preserve, in the soul, the life of grace." The Eucharist is, according to the Council of Trent, the divine medicine which purifies the soul from venial, and preserves her from mortal sins. The angelic doctor teaches that the holy Communion gives us strength to overcome all the attacks of the devil. Saint Chrysostom asserts that when we receive the holy Eucharist the devils are put to flight and the angels run to our assistance. Moreover, this sacrament infused into the soul great interior peace.

Practice

Blessed shall we be if the desire of being united to Jesus animates our whole life; if we often feast at His heavenly banquet in which Christ is received.

Prayer

Good Saint Anne, I wish to beg of thee help to make a good Communion during this novena and ever afterwards. I am about to approach the Lord in the holy Sacrament. I have prayed to thee, Great Saint Anne, and my heart is inflamed with love of thee. I must above all love my dear Lord Jesus, whom I am going to receive, that I may be strengthened in piety and holiness by His sacred presence. I will thank Jesus, in the Blessed Sacrament, for the many graces He has given thee, which have enabled thee to lead a holy life, and for the glory which has been a reward for thy faithfulness. I will beg Jesus in holy Communion to give me strength and perseverance, that I may make great progress in the difficult affair of my salvation and obtain everlasting happiness.

Ejaculation

Saint Anne obtain for me great love towards our Lord Jesus Christ present in the Most Holy Eucharist.

Sixth Day - Prayer

Prayers and supplications, arising from our heart and ascending to the very throne of God, must needs be the principal exercise of any novena. It is not the prayer we say that count so much, but it is the way that we pray. We have learned our prayers at our mother's knee and we have learned them so well that we are liable to utter them without ever thinking of what we are saying. Then they become a mere formula and surely such mockeries will not transport mountains or move God, to do great things for us. Then let us be sure that our prayers come from the heart and not merely from the lips. We should begin our prayers by putting ourselves in God's presence. We should say to ourselves: We are about to speak to the Great and Eternal Creator - to Him on whom we depend for every breath we draw. He, the Immense, the All Holy God is looking at us now; all the

Saints and angels are looking at us, pleased that we are going to speak to Him, and interested in what we are going to say. What are we before so glorious a God? Poor, little, weak, helpless creatures, wholly dependent on Him for even the breath with which we speak to Him; and more than this, we have sinned against Him, not once or twice, but again and again. We should be sincere in what we say to God. It is useless to read page after page out of our prayer book and not mean one word of what we have read. God does not care for that sort of prayer. We must not treat Him as we would be ashamed to treat a neighbor, turning away even while we were greeting Him. We must look at God and speak to Him in His presence. We must mean what we say. When we read our prayer book, let us stop from time to time and ask ourselves: "Do I really mean what I am saying?" If we do this we will soon begin to love prayer. God is more pleased with ten words from our heart than with ten pages read carelessly. These are the things we should take home to think about. First prayer is necessary for us; there is neither happiness nor salvation without it. Second, prayer must be real in the presence of the All Holy God; we must mean what we say. Third, it must be humble.

Practice

I know that God will comply with my wishes in prayer only in proportion as I comply with His commandments.

Prayer

O Great Saint Anne, I cannot pray. I am continually assailed by distractions that force my thought from God and thee. The world, that looks so dull all day, glows bright to me at prayer. Often, when my voice goes up in pleading, my heart remains here below. There are so many things I need that God might grant if I could only pray from my inner heart. O

Great Saint Anne, obtain that I may have the spirit of prayer; that my heart may burn with love for God and thee. Thou who art so powerful with God, direct, guide and help the powers of my soul that I may pray and do God's holy will.

Ejaculation

Great Saint Anne, obtain that the Holy Spirit breathe anew through all my prayers.

Seventh Day - Penance

Our prayers and supplications should be accompanied by works of penance and sacrifice, because penance is the principal element of the Christian life.

There are two forces in man that are continually warring against each other; a material force and a spiritual force. His body coming from the earth ever tends towards earthly things but his soul, coming from God, tends towards spiritual things. If the lower force is the stronger, then man will be more material and earthly, but if on the other hand, the higher force is the stronger, then he will be more spiritual and God like. Then it is of the greatest importance, for every man, to weaken this lower material force and to strengthen the higher spiritual force. This can be done only by depriving the material force of those things for which it craves. This is what we call penance or mortification. Then the spiritual force will dominate and man will be more pleasing to God and in consequence his prayers and supplications will be more efficacious. Hence the necessity of penance and mortification for those who are seeking the favors of God through a novena.

Practice

Observe faithfully the fasts and abstinence, unless lawfully excused.

Prayer

Great Saint! Thou didst join severe penance to admirable innocence of life; and I, who have so often offended God and deserved hell, hardly know the meaning of penance. What confusion for me and what folly if I leave the rigorous expiation of my sins to a future life when I can more easily obtain pardon for them here. My powerful Protectress, I stand in urgent need of thy help in this matter. Aid me to practice at once Christian mortification. Assist me to keep the fasts and abstinences of Holy Church and to flee all sinful pleasures.

Ejaculation

Saint Anne, obtain for me a spirit of compunction and the courage to do penance.

Eighth Day - Sacrifice

Another essential element of a successful novena is sacrifice. History teaches that when Christians sought favors at a Shrine, they prepared themselves for the pilgrimage by works of penance and sacrifice. They journeyed on foot to some distant shrine, begging on their way the few morsels of bread necessary for their sustenance. They prayed long hours before the altar. They denied themselves all worldly pleasures. Their hearts were fixed on heaven alone. They rightly believed that if they wished great favors from God, they must show intense earnestness and make sacrifices. Nothing pleases God more and makes Him better disposed towards us than sacrifices that are prompted by a generous heart. Let us then perform during this novena some kind of sacrifice. What shall it be? Shall we journey on foot from our

homes to the sanctuary? Or shall it be works of charity. The faithful discharge of our duties is often a difficult and always an acceptable sacrifice. Let us choose for ourselves that which is best suited to our condition and to our state of health. But let us bear in mind that during the novena, we must perform some kind of sacrifice if we desire to obtain great favors.

Practice

Invoke the help of Saint Anne whenever God or your own conscience demands some painful sacrifice.

Prayer

My beloved Patroness, thou knowest how far I am from possessing the generosity that should animate a child of thine; how weak, tepid and cowardly I am in the divine service, thou knowest that for many months, nay years, God ha? been, daily and in vain, asking of me the sacrifice of some affection, some pleasure, some sensuality, the source of all my sins. At least it has prevented my progress in love of God. I beg of thee, great Saint, to obtain for me thy good and powerful prayers, the strength to overcome whatever prevents me from giving my whole heart to God.

Ejaculation

Good Saint Anne, obtain for me generosity in God's service."

Ninth Day - Resignation

If we suffer from some illness, we can ask Saint Anne to cure us, but having done this, we must resign ourselves entirely to the will of God. We may also ask Him for health, with the view of employing it in His service, at the same time leaving ourselves entirely in His hands, that He may do with us what

He pleases; these are the best means to regain health. He who in his prayers seeks only himself instead of seeking God is not heard, while he who in his pleadings has only God and His holy will in view is always heard. "I sought the Lord, and He heard me." What a powerful remedy for all sorts of maladies we possess in the words: "Lord Thy will be done!" Therefore, when attacked by illness, abandon yourself entirely to the will of God, be ready to suffer whatever He may send you; unite yourself to Jesus on the cross, and do not desire to descend from it ere it pleases Him to take you down; show yourself ready even to die, if such be His holy will. Have your crucified Saviour always before your eyes; you will assuredly suffer with far greater patience when you consider how trifling your pains are compared with those which Jesus Christ suffered for the love of you.

Practice

I will submit to the will of God in all things.

Prayer

Merciful and beloved Saint Anne, being by the grace of God a Christian, I know I should ask, and by this prayer I sincerely do ask the health of my soul rather than that of the body, convinced as I am that this transitory life is given us in order that we may secure a better one hereafter, to which we can arrive only by the grace of God. This grace, together with the grace of patiently bearing my sufferings, I earnestly beg thee to obtain through the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ, the intercession of His Immaculate Mother and through thy powerful mediation, O glorious and good Saint Anne. Not in vain, O beloved Patroness, has the Almighty bestowed upon thee the power to work wonders. Wherefore I beseech thee, O kind Mother, to restore me to health, if it be God's holy Will. Amen.

May it be so for thy own greater glory.

Ejaculation

Good Saint Anne, obtain for me the spirit of resignation.

Novena in Honor of Saint Anne

First Day

Dear Saint Anne, poor prodigal child that I am, I have recourse to thee, and place myself under thy motherly care. Lend a favorable ear to my prayers and in pity refuse not to hear me. Turn not away from me at the sight of my sinful heart, but show thy never-failing goodness toward a repentant sinner. Let thy lips, sweet Mother, vouchsafe to plead in my favor before the supreme Judge of heaven, whose wrath I have kindled by my offences. Be my advocate; recommend me to His infinite mercy; obtain for me forgiveness and the grace of an humble and lasting repentance, with light to know and heart-felt sorrow to bewail my trespasses. Obtain for me strength not to fall again into sin, and to begin a new life.

Blessed Saint Anne, holy Mother, I also implore of thee the grace to love, to serve and honor thy Daughter, the most holy Virgin Mary, that I may share in her prayers and her favors. Deign to recommend me to her and pray to her for me. She refuses none of thy petitions, welcomes with loving kindness all those for whom thou intercedest, and leads them to the land of eternal bliss. May Mary look down with a watchful eye and maternal solicitude upon him who loves and serves her peerless mother; may she obtain for me salvation from her cherished Son; may she take me under her especial care during these my days on earth; may she with thee come to my aid, so that my enemies may never rejoice at the loss of my immortal soul nor boast of having enslaved a child and ward of Mary and Saint Anne.

Sweet Mother, direct me in all my actions, strengthen me in all temptations, console me in my affections, assist me in my

needs, and be with me always, in life and in death.

O Good Jesus, be compassionate to the faithful servants of Thy grandmother Saint Anne, show them Thy mercy, and for love of her extend to them a helping hand in all their necessities O Mary, Mother of God, vouchsafe always to protect those who pay homage to thy blessed Mother and serve her with a devout heart.

Our Father...

Hail Mary...

O Jesus, Mary, Anne, help me now and at the hour of my death.

Practice

I will during this Novena address several times each day pious ejaculations to Saint Anne.

Ejaculation

Saint Anne, obtain for me the grace of a holy death.

Here recommend your intention.

* * *

Second Day

From the depth of my heart, O noble Lady, Saint Anne, do I pay thee my homage this day and ask of thee to shelter me under the shield of thy maternal protection. Thou knowest the many dangers which surround me, therefore I beseech thee to be my protectress and to save me from spiritual shipwreck. Thou knowest, amiable Mother, how greatly I revere thee, how gladly I love to serve thee, what sweet

delight it gives me to praise thee, and what a soothing consolation it is to me to call upon thy name in my distress.

O Good Saint Anne, show thyself then toward me a tender Mother and powerful patroness. Thou beholdest me groaning under the weight of my sins. Pray for me then with the more ardor and entreaty; the more urgently plead for me; watch over my soul that it may not be lost; give me thy help; I seek it and hope for it from thy clemency; I look up to thee with a child-like trust, and I desire to live and to die in thy holy service.

O sweet advocate, present thyself for me before the throne of the divine Majesty, that by thy mediation I may obtain pardon of the evil I have done, strength henceforth to overcome my passions, and grace to spend all my days in good works. Let me feel the effects of thy power and bounty; may I root out of my heart its wicked leanings and rear holy virtues in their stead.

Sweet Jesus, I thank Thee for all the graces which in Thy infinite goodness Thou hast lavished upon Saint Anne; for having chosen her, among all women, to be Thy grandparent on earth and exalted her in Heaven with so great a power of working miracles. In the name of her great merits, I humbly recommend myself to the infinite mercy of Thy divine heart; let Saint Anne be my gentle Mother, my advocate, and my Protectress during this my life and at the hour of my death. Amen.

Most holy Mother, Saint Anne, be pleased to take me under thy tender care in all my wants; extend to me a helping hand and defend me against my enemies. Hasten to hear my prayers; in thy bounty I place my trust. Make righteous and godly all the desires of my heart, and always intercede for me before Jesus.

Our Father. . . .

Hail Mary. . . .

O Jesus, Mary, Anne, help me now and at the hour of my death.

Practice

To my prayers I will join during this Novena good resolutions.

Ejaculation

Good Saint Anne, beloved protectress, obtain for me from Jesus the gift of prayer.

Here recommend your intention.

* * *

Third Day

Hail, sweet Mother Saint Anne, who didst give the earliest cares to her whose purity surpasses that of angels, and from whom was born the Saviour of the world, thou, and thy holy spouse, Joachim, didst tend her infancy, present her to the Lord in the temple, and, according to thy promise, consecrate her to the service of God.

Hail, holy Mother Saint Anne, thou art the powerful advocate of those who call on thee and serve thee, for thou takest them under thy protection in life, thou providest for their needs, thou preservest them from danger, and obtainest for them the eternal rewards of paradise.

Hail, Saint Anne, mighty and powerful, who dost generously reward thy servants, guide all their undertakings and bring sinners to repentance; thou showest thyself specially

compassionate to those who are in sorrow or tribulation, and thou dost bestow temporal favors on those who place confidence in thee.

Hail, Saint Anne, blessed Mother, I rejoice in the numerous miracles thou dost perform constantly, which encourage all to have recourse to thee in their necessities.

Holy Mother Saint Anne, by that great power which God has given unto thee, show thyself my Mother, my consoler, and my advocate, reconcile me to the God whom I have so deeply offended; console me in all my trials, strengthen me in all my combats; aid me in my day of need; deliver me from all danger; help me at the hour of death and open to me the doors of paradise. Amen.

Our Father. . . .

Hail Mary. . . .

O Jesus, Mary, Anne, help me now and at the hour of my death.

Practice

I will, in honor of Saint Anne, during this novena, give an alms to the poor, or for a good work, and I will practice an act of mortification.

Ejaculation

O dear Saint Anne, obtain for me from Jesus crucified the grace always to forgive my enemies.

Here recommend your intention.

* * *

Fourth Day

Hail, holy Mother Saint Anne, I rejoice in the faith, piety, and love with which thou didst offer thy pure and holy daughter Mary in the temple. By the happiness which then inundated thy heart, I pray thee to present me to thy grandson Jesus, so that, being purified, I may be agreeable in His eyes. Present me also to thy holy daughter Mary, so that she may intercede for me, and taught by her I may evermore act conformably to the Will of God.

Hail, holy Mother Saint Anne, take me forever under thy protection and deliver me from the temptations which are constantly assailing me; defend me from the assaults of my enemies, so that they may not overcome me; save me from all the numberless dangers that surround me, so that I may not perish; above all assist me at my last hour; do thou and thy daughter Mary come then to my help and though I do not merit it, I ask ye both to vouchsafe to be present at my deathbed, to console and strengthen me; Holy Mary and holy Anne, show yourselves to be Mothers indeed, and obtain for me the grace of a good death. When my soul shall go forth from this world, do ye present it before God's tribunal, so that by your powerful help and intercession, it may obtain a favorable sentence. Amen.

Our Father. . . .

Hail Mary. . . .

O Jesus, Mary, Anne, help me now and at the hour of my death.

Practice

Today I will honor Saint Anne several times in her image.

Ejaculation

Good Saint Anne, obtain for me generosity in the service of God.

Here recommend your intention.

* * *

Fifth Day

Hail, all powerful lady, who, by a special favor from God, dost console the hearts of those who invoke thee, by procuring for them not only the eternal riches of heaven, but also, like a good Mother, success in their temporal affairs.

Holy Mother Anne, forget not that I am thy servant, and reject me not on account of my sins. I confess that my iniquities are great, but I now repent of them all; and though I do not deserve that my prayers should be granted, yet I have recourse to thee, knowing thee to be a good Mother, that will not repulse a repentant child; make peace for me with my Lord and my God whom I have offended, and deliver me from the punishment which my sins have deserved; obtain for me success in my temporal affairs, but above all, see to the salvation of my soul. Saint Anne, by thy influence with Jesus, the Son of Mary thy Daughter, thou hast obtained the gift of conversion for many sinners. Must I then, who have chosen thee for my Mother, be the only sinner abandoned by thee? No, Saint Anne, thy name alone, which signifies *Grace*, assures me the help of thy prayers, and by these prayers I am certain of obtaining pardon and mercy from Jesus. Yes, thou wilt pray for me now and at the hour of my death; at that decisive moment, thou wilt come to me with Jesus and Mary, thou wilt defend me against the attacks of the evil one, and thou wilt open to me the gates of heaven. Amen.

Our Father. . . .

Hail Mary. . . .

O Jesus, Mary, Anne, help me now and at the hour of my death.

Practice

I will assist as often as possible at holy Mass.

Ejaculation

Good Saint Anne, obtain for me that I may dread sin more than death.

Here recommend your intention.

* * *

Sixth Day

Good Saint Anne, thou knowest my pitiable state, thou knowest my want, how little good there is in me, and how prone I am to evil. I beg of thee to have pity on my wretchedness and not to suffer that my soul, the work of God, be lost forever. Through thy prayers and merits, obtain from the divine Goodness that I may be found worthy of becoming a faithful instrument for the glory of God and the salvation of others. Pride, vanity and self-love have taken possession of my soul and have stifled therein the graces and inspirations of God. Pluck these ill weeds from my heart and plant in their stead the holy virtue of humility, so that I may know and despise myself, conceive self-contempt with meekness and simplicity, thus to become agreeable in the eyes of the Most High. Then will his divine graces freely

enter into my inner soul and cause to spring forth the blessed fruit of good works.

My heart, alas! my inclinations, and my will are attached to vanity, to the world, and to sensuality. The great love which God bears toward me, the many benefits He has bestowed upon me, neither touch, nor rouse me from my guilty sloth.

Good Saint Anne, change these unholy dispositions. Let self-love and the love of the world perish in me; that henceforth the love of God may inflame my soul and alone reign therein; that I may show this sweet love within me by works of mercy and charity toward my neighbor. The fires of evil have consumed the precious gifts wherewith heaven had enriched my soul; O Saint Anne, in thy boundless charity, come to my aid and banish far from me every vicious thought and all evil longing. Cause to flourish in my heart the spotless lily of chastity, that its divine perfume may dispel every wrong desire. Help me to contend, O blessed Mother, against the power of darkness, that the fear of God and His hallowed love may supplant in my heart the barren pleasures of the world; that I may mortify and discipline my rebellious flesh. Let me gain a complete victory over my unruly passions, and thus merit that glorious crown which is given only to those who fought with steadfast manliness against the world, the flesh, and the devil. In this severe contest, do thou, O Saint Anne, support thy child. Let not the assaults of the enemy nor any temptation overcome me; let me forever preserve purity of heart and body. With thy most Holy Daughter Mary and her divine son Jesus, overshadow me, and protect me at all times. Amen.

Our Father. . . .

Hail Mary. . . .

O Jesus, Mary, Anne, help me now and at the hour of my death. Amen.

Practice

In order to be a worthy child of Saint Anne, I will approach regularly the holy tribunal of penance and use the means of salvation there provided and taught me.

Ejaculation

Good Saint Anne, by thy great reverence for God, deliver my country from the vice of blasphemy.

Here recommend your intention.

* * *

Seventh Day

Again today, most amiable Lady, I choose thee for my advocate and have recourse to thy intercession. Thou seest in me but a small share of good and a heavy weight of evil. By the power and the grace wherewith God has invested thee, extend to me thy helping hand. Deliver thy devoted servant from the wiles of Satan. Renew my mind and my heart; may I for the future lead such a Christian life that the remainder of my days may be the beginning of an eternity of celestial glory. My dear Mother Saint Anne, I have unbounded confidence in thy prayers; I place in thy blessed hands my soul, my body, and all my hopes, both in this world and in the world to come. Direct my actions in the way which thy wisdom seeth to be the best for thy confiding child. I place myself under thy motherly care, and with all the ardor of my soul I commit to thy guidance my course through life, and above all recommend to thy patronage the important work of my salvation. Receive me, O good Mother;

cover me with the mantle of thy protection; show me thy solicitude and thy tenderness. Look kindly upon me and come to my assistance. By thy earnest entreaty and thy great merits, may I obtain grace and mercy from God and all I stand in need of both for body and soul. Free me from all danger, O kind Mother; be thou the stay of my soul, and be my mediatress before the offended Majesty of my God. Obtain for me the remission of my offenses; ward off from me the chastisement I have deserved for them; help me to master my besetting sins; procure for me purity and humility, and the grace to lead so devout a life here upon earth that I may secure the everlasting reward of heaven. Amen.

Our Father. . . .

Hail Mary. . . .

O Jesus, Mary, Anne, help me now and at the hour of my death. Amen.

Practice

I will today, in honor of Saint Anne, keep a guard on my tongue, that I may not offend by speech.

Ejaculation

Good Saint Anne, obtain for me a true devotion to Mary.

Here recommend your intention.

* * *

Eighth Day

Hail, most blessed Mother Anne, I rejoice at thy great honor; thou gavest birth to Mary, that precious flower, whose blessed fruit, Jesus, has brought salvation to a lost world, fulfilled the desire of all pious hearts, conquered death, and restored life and hope to sinners. Vouchsafe to intercede for me before Jesus Christ and obtain for me pardon of my sins, a real change of life, and acceptable fruits of penance.

Exalted Lady, glorious Saint Anne, deliver me from everything that is displeasing in the sight of God; let thy bounteous hand enrich thy client with grace and virtue; strengthen me against the attacks of Satan, the wicked world, and my own perverse nature. Dear Saint Anne, Mother of Jesus' Mother, deign, with thy blessed Daughter, to watch over and make prosperous all my interests. Good Mother pray to him who for love of us deigned to clothe himself in our human flesh in the chaste womb of thy Daughter. Yes, pray to this gentle and mighty Grandson that He may wash my soul from every stain in His precious blood; that He may vouchsafe to send his Holy Spirit to enlighten me and direct me in all that I do, and make my heart and will obedient forever to His holy inspirations. Appease, O my Mother, appease my Judge, keep a watchful eye upon my soul; cause to flourish therein every virtue; help me in all things; help me in all my crosses and difficulties. Give me of the fulness of thy bounty, sustain my courage by thy favors, and lead me to a happy end. Amen.

Our Father. . . .

Hail Mary. . . .

O Jesus, Mary, Anne, help me now and at the hour of my death.

Practice

I will be faithful to invoke Saint Anne every day, even though I should have had the misfortune of displeasing God by mortal sin.

Ejaculation

Good Saint Anne, obtain for me the most strict fidelity to all the duties of my state in life.

Here recommend your intention.

* * *

Ninth Day

Dear Good Saint Anne, I have reached the end of the novena which I have undertaken in thy honor. I have asked, and this day again implore of thee, dear Mother, to obtain for me forgiveness of my many trespasses, true sorrow, a sincere and lasting amendment of life, and a good death; also such temporal and spiritual favors as I stand in need of for soul and body. But my miseries are endless; wherefore, O holy patroness, my entreaties must also be incessant. Let not I beseech thee, O Mother, let not thy kind ear grow weary of my prayers, though I repeat them so often. At last thy many favors will conquer my obdurate heart; they will endear me to thy service forever, and, through thine, to the faithful service of our God. Yes, dear patroness, cause my heart to relish the sweetness of divine love and things spiritual; fill my soul with true piety; enlighten my mind; purify my inclinations; give uprightness to my will and holiness to my intentions.

O bounteous Lady, secure for me perseverance in my good resolutions, resignation in adversities, Christian humility in my conduct, and prudence in all my actions. Through thy mediation, obtain that for the love of Jesus I may despise the

world and its vanities; grant that I may be delivered from all the wiles of Satan and that my soul may be filled with the love of God and of my neighbor. Do not fail, O my amiable Mother, to implore for me, from divine Providence, all needful aids through life. May I receive from thy bounteous hand, not only means sufficient for my own wants, but, further, be enabled through thy goodness to help the poor and contribute to the good works of our holy religion. Dear Good Saint Anne, obtain for me from our merciful Lord health of body and ease of mind; freedom from every misfortune and peace of heart. Assist me at the hour of my death; that I may depart this life with a heart truly repentant, a lively faith, a firm hope and ardent love, and fortified by the last Sacraments of holy Church. With thy holy Daughter Mary, do thou, O Saint Anne, protect me in my last moments; shield me from the snares of the evil one and his angels; secure for me before the judgment seat of God a favorable sentence, and lastly grant me a happy admission in the company of the blessed, in the ever-during kingdom of heaven, there to glorify and there to thank the Adorable Trinity, thy divine Grandson Jesus Christ, thy glorious Daughter Mary, and thyself, O dear Saint Anne, during endless ages. Amen. So I hope. So may it be.

Our Father. . . .

Hail Mary. . . .

O Jesus, Mary, Anne, help me now and at the hour of my death.

Practice

For the concluding act of my novena I will perform some good work in honor of Saint Anne.

Ejaculation

Good Saint Anne, by thy motherly intercession bring me into Paradise, where thou art, there to praise and thank thee forever.

Novena in Honor of Saint Anne

Introductory Prayer

to be said each day

Glorious Saint Anne, I salute thee and rejoice at the favors which God in His infinite goodness hath bestowed upon thee. He hath selected thee to be the mother of her who brought into the world the Savior of mankind, and hath endowed thee with the special prerogative of assisting those who invoke thee in their troubles and needs, both spiritual and temporal.

Relying on thy powerful intercession, I, though a poor sinner, come to thee this day, and place myself under thy motherly care. Receive me as thy child, and in pity refuse not to hear me, but show thy never-failing goodness, toward thy humble client. Let thy lips, sweet Mother vouchsafe to plead in my behalf. Be my advocate; recommend me to the infinite mercy of the Savior; obtain for me forgiveness of my sins and the grace of an humble and lasting repentance, together with all the blessings conducive to my temporal and eternal welfare. Especially recommend to the heavenly Father my present need, for which I have undertaken to make this novena.

Blessed Anne, holy Mother, I also ask of thee the grace of a special devotion to the most holy Virgin Mary, thy daughter, that I may share in her prayers and her favors. Deign to recommend me to her. She will refuse thee nothing, and will welcome with loving kindness all those for whom thou intercedest. Beseech her to watch over me with maternal solicitude during my sojourn upon earth, that I may overcome the enemies of my salvation, advance in piety and the love of God, and obtain everlasting life.

Saint Anne, sweet Mother, strengthen me in my temptations, deliver me from all evils console me in my afflictions, assist me in my needs, help me to carry out my good resolutions, to lead a holy life, die a good death, and obtain eternal happiness. Amen.

First Day

Glorious Mother, Saint Anne, during thy sojourn on earth, thou didst possess a strong faith in the living God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Indeed, thy faith resembled the faith of thy illustrious ancestor Abraham of whom it is said, that he believed God and his faith was reputed to him unto justice. Thy faith in God embraced the belief in the Messiah to come, for whom thou didst long and pray that His coming might not be delayed, so that the world might return to the service of the one true God.

Thy faith, too, was a living faith which influenced all thy actions, and prompted thee to regulate them according to the demands of that law which thy faith taught thee. Thy life was, therefore, a life for God. Indeed, all thy actions proceeded from the virtue of faith and were performed for the greater honor and glory of God. This made thee worthy to become the mother of the Mother of God, and the grandmother of the Messiah.

By thy holy faith, obtain for me the grace to hold as infallibly true all that Holy Church, the immaculate Spouse of Christ, teaches and proposes to my belief. Grant that I may never become weak in my faith, deny it, or be ashamed of it, but that it may become dearer to me from day to day, so that I may be ever ready to seal my faith with my blood.

Help me, Blessed Mother, to live according to my faith, so that all my actions may proceed from faith, be in harmony

with the will of God. and be performed for the greater honor and glory of my sovereign Lord. Amen.

Three Our Fathers and Hail Marys.

Priest: Holy Mother, good Saint Anne!

All: Obtain for me an increase of faith.

O God, who didst vouchsafe to confer upon Saint Anne the grace to be the mother of the Mother of Thy only-begotten Son, grant, that those who do honor to her memory, may by her intercession obtain the divine assistance, through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Second Day

Glorious Mother, Saint Anne, together with thy staunch faith thou didst possess an equally firm hope. Truly, thou didst most firmly trust, that the Most High would fulfill the promise so often renewed to the Patriarchs and Prophets, to send the One whom He wished to send to redeem mankind.

Thy confidence in God, too, was unbounded. Thou didst fully understand that man depends entirely on God, that he must expect all blessings from Him, that without Him he is nothing and can do nothing. Therefore, when the heavenly Father seemed unwilling to grant thee the happiness of becoming a mother, thou didst not lose confidence, but didst continue to beseech Him, as did Anna, the mother of Samuel, and thy hope was graciously rewarded. The Lord gave thee even more than thou couldst have hoped to receive. He gave thee a daughter who was predestined to be the mother of the Savior.

Thy unbounded confidence in God also obtained for thee the special prerogative of being able to help all who have

recourse to thee in their trials and necessities. Thy confidence will not permit the Lord to refuse thee anything.

By this firm hope and unbounded confidence then, obtain for me a similar trust in the promises which the Lord has made to us, His wayward children, and an unshakable confidence in the fatherly care of our heavenly Father for each and every one of us. Teach me, Saint Anne, to mistrust myself and to place my trust in God alone. Let me fully comprehend the truth, that if I seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, that the heavenly Father will never forsake me, but will provide for me with fatherly care. Prompt me to look up to God in all my troubles, anxieties, and needs, and to pray to Him as confidently as thou didst, when beseeching Him to grant thy request. Amen.

Three Our Fathers and Hail Marys.

Priest: Holy Mother, good Saint Anne!

All: Obtain for me an unbounded confidence in the divine goodness.

O God, who didst vouchsafe to confer upon Saint Anne the grace to be the mother of the Mother of Thy only-begotten Son, grant, that those who do honor to her memory, may by her intercession obtain the divine assistance, through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Third Day

Glorious Mother, Saint Anne, God in His infinite love hath shown thee exceedingly great love, inasmuch as He hath chosen thee to be the mother of the Blessed Virgin, given thee everlasting life, and even endowed thee with the gift of working miracles. In return for this singular love of the Most High, thy heart was ever aglow with love for God. The Lord

hath said: "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." (John 14:21) This criterion of love for God shone forth most eminently in thy life. Thy life with all its actions was constantly in harmony with the divine precepts. Indeed, thou didst observe them with unflinching fidelity. Thy life was a life of singular holiness, and made thee worthy of the manifold graces which God in His infinite goodness bestowed upon thee.

Thy love for God, too, was the motive which led thee to separate thyself from thy greatest treasure, thy only child; the Blessed Virgin, and present her to the high-priest in the temple, so that she might be consecrated to the service of God.

By thy ardent love for God, obtain for me a spark of that great love which the Lord came upon earth to enkindle in our hearts. Assist me, that I may love God with my whole heart, with my whole soul, with my whole mind and with all my strength, that my whole life may be spent in loving God. Intercede for me, that I may be faithful to my God all the days of my life, and that I may never banish His love from my heart by committing a grievous sin. O Blessed Mother, do help me to avoid sin, which is the greatest and only evil, and to increase daily in the love of God.

Draw me, dearest Mother, toward the Fountain of love, which is offered us in the most Holy Eucharist. Make me worthy to receive my Lord and God in Holy Communion. Let me understand, that there is nothing which will increase the love of God in my heart more, than the worthy reception of this Sacrament of love, and, therefore lead me on to receive frequently, even daily, so that Jesus may abide in me and I in Him. Amen.

Three Our Fathers and Hail Marys.

Priest: Holy Mother, good Saint Anne!

All: Obtain for me an ardent love of God.

O God, who didst vouchsafe to confer upon Saint Anne the grace to be the mother of the Mother of Thy only-begotten Son, grant, that those who do honor to her memory, may by her intercession obtain the divine assistance, through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Fourth Day

Glorious Mother, Saint Anne, thy heart was always aglow with love for God. Indeed, even now thou art enveloped with the fire of divine love, for thou hast entered into eternal glory and art most intimately united to God in everlasting love. The love of God, however, cannot exist in the human hearts without being accompanied with ardent charity for one's neighbor. "For this commandment we have from God, that he who loveth God, loveth also his brother." (I John 4:21) Thou didst possess this charity in an eminent degree. In fact, it was charity for thy neighbor which prompted thee to pray unceasingly for the coming of the Redeemer, that all men, namely, might be saved from eternal perdition. This charity, too, moves thee to take such deep interest in us that thou dost assist, often in a miraculous manner, those who have recourse to thee.

By thine ardent charity for thy neighbor obtain for me true Christian charity. Help me to practice most faithfully this precept, which the Lord calls His own commandment. Teach me to love my neighbor for the love of God. Assist me to practice charity, especially then, when weak human nature rebels against the fulfillment of this precept; when, namely, my neighbor has offended me and I am tempted to seek revenge. Do then, Blessed Mother, obtain for me the grace to

forgive my enemy truly and sincerely after the example of my Blessed Savior.

Grant, too, dearest Mother, that my charity may be charity not in words alone, but in deed and in truth, so that I may always most willingly assist my neighbor when he is in need. Let me not only be mindful of the temporal needs of my fellowman, but of his spiritual needs as well, so that I may do all in my power to preserve him from sin, lead him along the path of virtue, and help him to save his immortal soul. Amen.

Three Our Fathers and Hail Marys.

Priest: Holy Mother, good Saint Anne!

All: Obtain for me true Christian charity.

O God, who didst vouchsafe to confer upon Saint Anne the grace to be the mother of the Mother of Thy only-begotten Son, grant, that those who do honor to her memory, may by her intercession obtain the divine assistance, through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Fifth Day

Glorious Mother, Saint Anne, thy blessed daughter, the most Holy Virgin Mary, was exceedingly humble. "The Lord hath regarded the humility of His handmaid" (Luke 1:48), were the words she chanted when greeted by Saint Elizabeth as the Mother of God. From this we may conclude that thou, the mother of the humblest Virgin, didst distinguish thyself by a most profound humility. Indeed, it was thy humility that induced the heavenly Father, to choose thee from among all women to be the Mother of His humble daughter, the Blessed Virgin Mary. Thy humility was the foundation upon

which rested the high degree of sanctity which thou didst acquire.

By thy humility, then, O Blessed Mother, deign to look down upon me, thy miserable client, who hath recourse to thee, and obtain for me true humility, which is the foundation and pillar of all virtues. Behold, dearest Mother, my heart which has as yet not conquered pride. Indeed, it is pride that is the cause of my numerous and grievous sins, and which in particular gives occasion to my many faults against charity. Obtain for me the grace to overcome my pride, my vain glory, my greed for the favor and praise of the world. Assist me to be truly humble, to view myself as I am in the eyes of God, realizing that all the good which I may perceive in myself is nothing but God's gift, and must, therefore, be referred to Him. Let me, therefore, never prefer myself before others; especially, dearest Mother, never permit me to offend God in seeking the acknowledgment and the recognition of the world. Help me to mould my life after Him who says of Himself: "Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest to your souls." (Matthew 11:29) Amen.

Three Our Fathers and Hail Marys.

Priest: Holy Mother, good Saint Anne!

All: Obtain for me the virtue of humility.

O God, who didst vouchsafe to confer upon Saint Anne the grace to be the mother of the Mother of Thy only-begotten Son, grant, that those who do honor to her memory, may by her intercession obtain the divine assistance, through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Sixth Day

Glorious Mother, Saint Anne, I admire thy extraordinary patience, which thou didst manifest during the many years in which thou wast childless. To be without children was considered a disgrace among the chosen people of God, who understood that a child is a gift from on high, and the greatest blessing which God bestows upon married people. Thou, however, didst bear this humiliation with patience, offering it to God, that He in His infinite goodness and wisdom, might deign to bestow upon thee the coveted treasure. Thy patience was most singularly rewarded, for the heavenly Father gave thee a child, which was predestined to be the most holy among women, and the Mother of His divine Son.

Besides the affliction of being childless, thou hadst to endure the trials and troubles of life. Thy daily cross thou didst bear with the patience of a saint. Thou didst accept thy trials and afflictions as coming from the hand of a loving Father, who permitted them to overtake thee for the atonement of thy shortcomings, and for thy advancement in perfection.

Good Mother, obtain for me the grace to bear my cross with true Christian patience, for the love of my cross-bearing Savior. Patience, dearest Mother, is a virtue against which I often fail. Indeed, a word will suffice to arouse my temper and prompt me to speak unkind words and thus offend against fraternal charity.

Help me, dearest Mother, to follow thy example, and the example of the meek Savior, who opened not His mouth when He was falsely accused and reviled. Assist me also to cheerfully bear all the troubles connected with my state of life. Never allow me to offend my Lord and God in order to escape the inconveniences which my vocation imposes upon me. Amen.

Three Our Fathers and Hail Marys.

Priest: Holy Mother, good Saint Anne!

All: Obtain for me the virtue of patience.

O God, who didst vouchsafe to confer upon Saint Anne the grace to be the mother of the Mother of Thy only-begotten Son, grant, that those who do honor to her memory, may by her intercession obtain the divine assistance, through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Seventh Day

Glorious Mother, Saint Anne, patience requires a certain amount of self-denial, and self-denial is the guardian of the most beautiful of all virtues, of holy purity. Thy whole life was adorned with great purity; it was most beautiful and spotless, for otherwise the heavenly Father would not have chosen thee to be the mother of the immaculate Virgin of virgins. Truly, thou didst avoid all things that could injure this delicate virtue, and didst observe most faithfully the chastity incumbent upon thy state of life.

Purity, dearest Mother, is a virtue which makes man similar to the angels, and renders him most pleasing to the Sacred Heart. It is a fountain of innumerable graces, and must adorn each and every one of us. Of all virtues, it is most easily lost, and countless Christians daily offend against it. Impurity is a vice which debases man and renders him unfit for the service of God. It banishes the love of God from his heart, and daily plunges many souls into the abyss of hell.

Most pure Mother, I entreat thee most earnestly, protect me against the vice of impurity. Behold my many temptations. Verily, except I receive help from above, I cannot remain pure. Therefore, dearest Mother, pray for me that I may

never offend against the virtue of purity, not in thought, nor in word, nor in deed. Help me to avoid the occasions to the sin of impurity, and never allow me to be an occasion of sin to others. Keep my heart pure and chaste, that although in the world, I may not be of the world, and may receive the reward promised to those who lead a chaste life: "Blessed are the clean of heart for they shall see God." (Matthew 5:8) Amen.

Three Our Fathers and Hail Marys.

Priest: Holy Mother, good Saint Anne!

All: Obtain for me purity of heart.

O God, who didst vouchsafe to confer upon Saint Anne the grace to be the mother of the Mother of Thy only-begotten Son, grant, that those who do honor to her memory, may by her intercession obtain the divine assistance, through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Eighth Day

Glorious Mother, Saint Anne, thy many virtues thou didst acquire by thy fervor in God's service, and especially by thy fervor in prayer. Prayer is the breath of the soul; it is absolutely necessary in order to preserve supernatural life and obtain eternal salvation. We must pray frequently, must pray, as it were without ceasing. Blessed Mother, thou didst not neglect this excellent means of grace, but didst raise thy soul to God each day in fervent prayer. Prayer was thy refuge in all thy needs. Yea, when it seemed that thy home should be denied a great treasure, thy prayers ascended unceasingly to the throne of God. Thou didst each day beseech the heavenly Father to give thee a child, and thy prayers were not in vain. God, in His infinite goodness, granted thee more than thou didst dare to ask of Him. Thy

prayers, too, ascended to heaven in behalf of the sinful human race which was sitting in the darkness of idolatry, unmindful of its dearest Mother, was indeed a life of prayer.

How different is my life! Behold me good Mother, frequently distracted in my prayers; slothful when I am supposed to raise my soul to God; neglectful of this sacred and necessary duty. Obtain for me an ardent love for prayer; teach me how to pray well; and do thou unite thy devout prayers to mine, that they may be heard at the throne of God, and that I may obtain my requests and also eternal salvation. Amen.

Three Our Fathers and Hail Marys.

Priest: Holy Mother, good Saint Anne!

All: Obtain for me the gift of prayer.

O God, who didst vouchsafe to confer upon Saint Anne the grace to be the mother of the Mother of Thy only-begotten Son, grant, that those who do honor to her memory, may by her intercession obtain the divine assistance, through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Ninth Day

Glorious Mother, Saint Anne, this is the last day of my novena in thy honor. During these days of grace I have come to thee most zealously, invoked thee most fervently, and placed unbounded confidence in thy powerful intercession. O Blessed Mother, let my confidence be unshaken. Do thou answer my prayers and obtain my request. At the same time, obtain for me that spirit which accompanied thy prayers, namely, resignation to God's holy will. God is our Father, and loves us exceedingly. He is an infinitely wise Father, who knows what is to our real advantage. He will, consequently, not grant us what would be to our detriment.

If thou seest, O good Mother, that the fulfillment of the request I have made during this novena would be to my disadvantage, I beseech thee, not to ask the heavenly Father to grant it. At the same time, however, I entreat thee not to forsake me. Let not my prayers be wholly in vain, but obtain for me such other graces as will promote my temporal and spiritual welfare.

Help me, dearest Mother, ever to be satisfied with what the Lord may send me. Grant that I may at all times and in all things observe the hand of a loving Father, that is directing everything in my life for my true welfare.

Among all blessings there is none of so great importance for me as the grace of a happy death. Do thou, Blessed Mother, be ever solicitous to procure this grace for me, a poor sinner. Teach me how to live and to die in the grace of God. Protect me that I may always observe the commandments of God, increase in virtue and obtain eternal glory. Amen.

Three Our Fathers and Hail Marys.

Priest: Holy Mother, good Saint Anne!

All: By thy motherly intercession lead me to Heaven.

O God, who didst vouchsafe to confer upon Saint Anne the grace to be the mother of the Mother of Thy only-begotten Son, grant, that those who do honor to her memory, may by her intercession obtain the divine assistance, through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Closing Prayer

Glorious Saint Anne, thou hast shown thyself so powerful in thy intercession, so tender and compassionate toward those who honor thee and invoke thee in suffering and distress,

that I cast myself at thy feet with perfect confidence and beseech thee most humbly and earnestly to take me under thy protection in my present necessities and to obtain for me the favor that I desire. Vouchsafe to recommend my request to Mary, thy beloved daughter, the merciful Queen of Heaven, that she may plead my cause before the throne of Jesus, her divine Son. Cease not to intercede for me until my request is granted. Above all, obtain for me a great love for Jesus and Mary, that my heart may be adorned with their virtues, that I may live a good life, die a happy death, and one day behold my God face to face for all eternity. Amen.

Priest: Good Saint Anne, Mother of her who is our life, our sweetness and our hope,

All: Pray for me, and obtain my request. Amen.

Novena Prayers to Saint Anne

First Day

Great Saint Ann, engrave indelibly in my heart and in my mind the words which have reclaimed and sanctified so many sinners: "What shall it profit a man to, gain the whole world if he lose his own soul?" May this be the principal fruit of these pious exercises by which I will strive to honor thee during this Novena. At thy feet I renew my resolution to invoke thee daily, not only for the success of my temporal affairs and to be preserved from sickness and suffering, but above all, that I may be preserved from all sin, that I may gain the victory over my depraved inclination, and that I may succeed in working out my eternal salvation. O my powerful Protectress, do not let me lose my soul, but obtain for me the grace of winning my way to heaven, there with thee, thy blessed spouse and thy glorious daughter, to sing the praise of the most holy and adorable Trinity forever and ever. Amen.

Practice: Honor Good Saint Ann all the days of your life, by some prayer or short ejaculation.

* * *

Second Day

Glorious Saint Ann, how canst thou be otherwise than overflowing with tenderness towards poor sinners like myself, since thou art the grandmother of Him Who shed His Blood for them, and the mother of her whom the saints call the advocate of sinners? To thee, therefore, I address my prayers with confidence. Vouchsafe to commend me to Jesus and Mary so that, at thy request, they may grant me

remission of my sins, perseverance, the love of God, charity for all mankind, and the special grace (*name it*) of which I stand in need at this present time. O my powerful Protectress, let me not lose my soul, but obtain for me that, through the merits of Jesus Christ and the intercession of Mary, I may have the happiness of seeing them, of loving and praising them with thee for all eternity. Amen.

Practice: When you pray to Saint Ann do not fail to ask of her the love of Jesus and Mary. It is the most beneficial prayer you can offer and it will always be granted.

* * *

Third Day

Beloved of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, Mother of the Queen of Heaven, take us, and all who are dear to us, under thy special care. Obtain for us the virtues thou didst instill into the heart of her who was destined to become the Mother of God, and the graces with which thou wast endowed. Sublime model of Christian womanhood! Pray that we may imitate thy example in our homes and families, listen to our petitions, and obtain our requests. Guardian of the infancy and childhood of the most Blessed Virgin Mary, obtain the graces necessary for all who enter the marriage state, that imitating thy virtues they may sanctify their homes, and lead the souls entrusted to their care to eternal glory. Amen.

Practice: Ask of God, through the intercession of Saint Ann and of Saint Joachim, the virtues proper to your state of life and the grace to worthily fulfill all its obligations.

* * *

Fourth Day

Glorious Saint, I kneel in confidence at thy feet for thou also hast tasted the bitterness and sorrow of life. My necessities, the cause of my tears, are as follows: (*name them*). Good Saint Ann, thou, who didst suffer much during the twenty years that preceded thy glorious maternity, I beseech thee, by all thy sufferings and humiliations, to grant my prayer. I pray thee, through thy love for thy glorious spouse, through thy love for thy immaculate child, through the joy thou didst feel at the moment of her happy birth, not to refuse me. Bless me, bless my family and all who are dear to me, so that some day we may all be with thee in the glory of heaven for all eternity. Amen.

Practice: Patience under suffering is the shortest road to heaven, and a great sign of predestination. When crosses overtake you, ask Saint Ann to give you patience and resignation to bear them.

* * *

Fifth Day

Great Saint, how far I am from resembling thee, I so easily give way to impatience and discouragement; and so easily give up praying when God does not at once grant my request. That is why I am so wretched and so poor in virtue. Prayer is the key to all heavenly treasures and I cannot pray, because my weak faith and languid confidence fail me at the slightest delay of divine mercy. O my powerful Protectress, come to my aid, cause my confidence and fervor, supported by the promises of Jesus Christ, to redouble in proportion as the trial to which God in His goodness subjects me is prolonged, that I may thus obtain, like thee, more than I can venture to ask. In future I will remember that I am made for heaven and not for earth, for eternity and not for time; that consequently I must ask,

above all, the salvation of my soul which is assured to all who pray properly and who persevere in prayer. Amen.

Practice: One of the greatest graces you can ask of God through Saint Ann's intercession, is unshaken confidence in the promise made by Jesus to those who pray.

* * *

Sixth Day

Glorious Saint Ann, mother of the august Mother of God, I beg thee to obtain, through thy intercession, the pardon of my sins and the assistance I need in my troubles. What can I not hope for if thou deignest to take me under thy protection? The Most High has been pleased to grant the prayers of sinners whenever thou hast been charitable enough to be their advocate. Humbly prostrate at thy feet, I beg thee to help me in all spiritual and temporal dangers; to guide me in the true path of Christian perfection, and finally, to obtain for me the grace of ending my life with the death of the just, so that I may contemplate face to face thy beloved Jesus and thy daughter Mary, in thy loving companionship throughout eternity. Amen.

Practice: Invoke Saint Ann's aid whenever God requires you to make a painful and difficult sacrifice; she will make it easier for you.

* * *

Seventh Day

O Good Saint Ann, so justly called the mother of the infirm, the cure of those who suffer from disease, look kindly upon the sick for whom I pray; alleviate their sufferings; cause them to sanctify their sufferings by patience and complete

submission to the divine will; finally deign to obtain health for them and with it the firm resolution to honor Jesus, Mary and thyself by the faithful performance of duties. But, merciful Saint Ann, I ask thee above all, salvation of the soul, rather than bodily health, for I am convinced that this fleeting life is given us solely to assure us a better one. Now, we cannot obtain that better life without the help of God's graces. I earnestly beg them of thee for the sick and for myself, through the merits of Our Lord Jesus Christ, through the intercession of His Immaculate Mother and through thy efficacious and powerful mediation, O glorious Saint Ann. Amen.

Practice: A sure way of making yourselves dear to Saint Ann is to be charitable to your brethren, all of whom are her children. Apply yourselves to relieving their corporal necessities; be zealous for their salvation; never let a day pass without praying for the conversion of sinners and the deliverance of the souls in Purgatory.

* * *

Eighth Day

Remember, O Saint Ann, thou whose name signifieth grace and mercy that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help and sought thy intercession, was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, I fly unto thee, good and kind mother; I take refuge at thy feet and sinful as I am, I venture to appear before thee, groaning under the weight of my sins. O holy Mother of the Immaculate Virgin Mary, despise not my petitions but hear me and grant my prayer. Amen.

Practice: Holiness is the highest gift to which a creature can aspire. With the aid of divine grace you can obtain it. God

even commands you to strive for it with all your might: for that reason are you a Christian. Make the resolution to do everything in your power to win that treasure. There have been Saints in all conditions of life; why cannot you, with the help of God, do what they have done?

* * *

Ninth Day

Most holy Mother of the Virgin Mary, glorious Saint Ann, I, a miserable sinner, confiding in thy kindness, choose thee today as my special advocate. I offer and consecrate my person and all my interests to thy care and maternal solicitude. I purpose to serve and honor thee all my life for the love of thy most holy daughter and to do all in my power to spread devotion to thee.

O my very good Mother and advocate, deign to accept me as thy servant and to adopt me as thy child. O glorious Queen, I beg thee, by the Passion of my most loving Jesus, the Son of Mary, thy most holy daughter, to assist me in all the necessities both of my body and my soul. Venerable Mother, I beg thee to obtain for me the grace of leading a life perfectly conformable in all things to the divine will. I place my soul in thy hands and in those of thy kind daughter; I confide it to thee, above all at the moment, when it will be about to separate itself from my body in order that, appearing under thy patronage before the Supreme Judge, He may find it worthy of enjoying His divine presence in thy holy companionship in heaven. Amen.

Practice: Pray daily to Saint Ann for the love of Jesus and Mary and for victory over that evil inclination which is most hurtful to your soul.

Litanies



Litany of Saint Anne

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God, the Father of Heaven, have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.

God the Holy Ghost, have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity one God, have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, Pray for us

Saint Anne, Mother of the Virgin Mary, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, Spouse of Saint Joachim, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, Ark of Noah, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, root of Jesse, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, fruitful vine, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, joy of the angels, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, hope of the patriarchs, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, vessel full of grace, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, mirror of obedience, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, mirror of patience, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, mirror of devotion, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, support of the Church, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, refuge of sinners, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, mother of virgins, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, help of Christians, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, gate of salvation, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, guide of pilgrims, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, consolatrix of the afflicted, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, health of the sick, Pray for us.

Saint Anne, help of all who invoke you, Pray for us.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, spare us,
O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,

graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us, O Lord.

Pray for us, O blessed Saint Anne.

That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us Pray.

O God, Who by Your grace, was pleased to choose blessed Anne to be the mother of the Virgin Mary, mercifully grant that we who celebrate her praises may be assisted by her prayers to You, Who live and reign in a world without end. Amen.

Litany in honor of Saint Anne

(for private use)

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God, the Father of Heaven, have mercy on us.

God, the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy on us.

God, the Holy Ghost, have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, one God, have mercy on us.

Saint Anne, pray for us.

Saint Anne, offspring of the royal race of David, pray for us.

Saint Anne, daughter of the Patriarchs, pray for us.

Saint Anne, faithful spouse of Saint Joachim, pray for us.

Saint Anne, mother of Mary, the Virgin Mother of God, pray for us.

Saint Anne, gentle mother of the Queen of Heaven, pray for us.

Saint Anne, grandmother of Our Savior, pray for us.

Saint Anne, beloved of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, pray for us.

Saint Anne, instrument of the Holy Spirit, pray for us.

Saint Anne, richly endowed with God's grace, pray for us.

Saint Anne, example of piety and patience in suffering, pray for us.

Saint Anne, mirror of obedience, pray for us.

Saint Anne, ideal of pure womanhood, pray for us.

Saint Anne, protectress of virgins, pray for us.

Saint Anne, model of Christian mothers, pray for us.

Saint Anne, protectress of the married, pray for us.

Saint Anne, guardian of children, pray for us.

Saint Anne, support of Christian family life, pray for us.

Saint Anne, help of the Church, pray for us.
Saint Anne, mother of mercy, pray for us.
Saint Anne, mother of confidence, pray for us.
Saint Anne, friend of the poor, pray for us.
Saint Anne, example of widows, pray for us.
Saint Anne, health of the sick, pray for us.
Saint Anne, cure of those who suffer from disease, pray for us.
Saint Anne, mother of the infirm, pray for us.
Saint Anne, light of the blind, pray for us.
Saint Anne, speech of the dumb, pray for us.
Saint Anne, hearing of the deaf, pray for us.
Saint Anne, consolation of the afflicted, pray for us.
Saint Anne, comforter of the oppressed, pray for us.
Saint Anne, joy of the angels and saints, pray for us.
Saint Anne, refuge of sinners, pray for us.
Saint Anne, harbor of salvation, pray for us.
Saint Anne, patroness of a happy death, pray for us.
Saint Anne, help of all who have recourse to you, pray for us.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, spare us,
O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,
graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have
mercy on us.

V. Pray for us, good Saint Anne,

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ

Let us pray

Almighty and eternal God, You were pleased to choose Saint Anne to be the Grandmother of Your loving Son; grant, we pray, that we who confidently honor her, may through her

prayers attain to everlasting life. Through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Hymns and Poems



Hymn to Saint Anne

To kneel at thine altar, in faith we draw near,
Led on-ward by Mary, thy daughter so dear.
O Good Saint Anne! we call on thy name,
Thy praises loud, thy children proclaim.

To all who invoke thee thou lendest an ear,
Thou soothest the sorrows of all who draw near.
O Good Saint Anne! we call on thy name,
Thy praises loud, thy children proclaim.

The sailor, the trav'ler whom storms make afraid,
Find safety and calm when they call on thine aid.
O Good Saint Anne! we call on thy name,
Thy praises loud, thy children proclaim.

The weary, despondent or sorrowful here,
Find help in their sadness, a balm for each tear.
O Good Saint Anne! we call on thy name,
Thy praises loud, thy children proclaim.

The sick, the afflicted, the lame and the blind,
The suffering, the erring all solace here find.
O Good Saint Anne! we call on thy name,
Thy praises loud, thy children proclaim.

As Pilgrims we come here to kneel at thy feet;
O grant what we ask thee, if for us 'tis meet.
O Good Saint Anne! we call on thy name,
Thy praises loud, thy children proclaim.

Saint Anne, we implore thee to list to our pray'r
In time of temptation, take us in thy care.

O Good Saint Anne! we call on thy name,
Thy praises loud, thy children proclaim.

In this life obtain for us that which is best,
And bring us at length to our heavenly rest.
O Good Saint Anne! we call on thy name,
Thy praises loud, thy children proclaim.

Hymn to Blessed Anne

Saintly kings and priestly sires,
Blended in thy sacred line:
Thou in virtue all before thee.
Didst excel by grace Divine.

Blessed Anne, Juda's glory.
Thro' the church from East to West;
Ev'ry tongue proclaims thy glory.
Holy Mary's Mother blest.

Link'd in bands of purest wedlock.
Thine it was for us to bear.
By the favor of high heaven.
Our immortal Virgin Star.

Honor, glory, virtue, merit.
Be to thee, O Virgin's Son,
With the Father and the Spirit
While eternal ages run.

To Saint Ann, Mother of the Blessed Virgin

for her feast on the 26th of July

Spotless Anna! Juda's glory!
Through the Church from East to West
Every tongue proclaims thy praises
Holy Mary's Mother blest!

Saintly kings and priestly sires
Blended in thy sacred line;
Thou in virtue, all before thee
Didst excel by grace divine.

Link'd in bonds of purest wedlock,
Thine it was for us to bear,
By the favor of High Heaven,
Our eternal Virgin Star.

From thy stem in beauty budded
Ancient Jesse's mystic rod;
Earth from thee received the Mother
Of the Almighty Son of God.

All the human race benighted
In the depths of darkness lay;
When in Ann it saw the dawning
Of the long expected day.

Honor, glory, virtue, merit,
Be to Thee, O Virgin's Son!
With the Father and the Spirit
While Eternal ages run.

Hymn to Saint Anne

Dear Saint Anne, our Lady's Mother,
Stem of Jesse's Mystic Rod,
From that stem there sprang a Flower,
From that Flower, our Saviour God.
Light of light, O Mother blessed,
Shone upon thy Daughter's bower,
When her Son, the King of Glory,
Dwelt among us, Heaven's Dower.

Mother of the Spotless Lily,
From God's Paradise above,
Look upon us exiled children,
Take us 'neath thy sheltering love.
Dear Saint Anne, do thou obtain us
Fruits from Judah's Peerless Tree,
Fruits of Justice and of Mercy,
Faith and Hope and Charity.

Helper of the sad and suffering,
Patron of the Pilgrim's way,
Light of blind, and strength to failing,
Guide for those who go astray.
Dear Saint Anne, bless and receive us,
Bring us to that glorious sight
Of the Tree that healeth nations
In the Country of Delight.

- Miss A Pritchard, Caversham

Laudate Saint Anne

Good, holy Saint Ann, dear Mother so meek,
Look down on thy Pilgrims, whose aid we here seek.
Laudate, Laudate, Laudate Mari-Ann!

Saint Ann, we implore thee, to list to our prayer,
O, grant what we ask thee, take us in thy care!
Laudate, Laudate, Laudate Mari-Ann!

We come from a distance, to pray at thy shrine,
With faith and devotion, thou canst' not decline.
Laudate, Laudate, Laudate Mari-Ann!

As Pilgrims we come here, O, lend us thine ear!
O, sooth thou our sorrows to all who draw near.
Laudate, Laudate, Laudate Mari-Ann!

To thee, Mother Ann, we pray
That your help we may obtain,
Holy Mother Anna!
Graciously thy aid we seek
Help, that we may follow thee,
Holy Mother Anna!

Pray that faith may strongly hold
Firmly through each strife and woe:
Holy Mother Anna!
That our hearts may trust in thee
When to sin we tempted be.
Holy Mother Anna!

Pray that hope enlighten here,
When the gloom of fear draws near,
Holy Mother Anna!

Be thou self our guiding star
That shines forth in near and far.
Holy Mother Anna!

Pray that heart and courage mine
Be inflamed with love divine,
Holy Mother Anna!
That our sins forgiveness find
And as you be sanctified.
Holy Mother Anna!

Cares of body and of soul
Next to God to you be told,
Holy Mother Anna!
You our comfort be in trials;
Help us bear our burdens all.
Holy Mother Anna!

Bless our fruits and country dear;
Ward off sorrow and all fears,
Holy Mother Anna!
Hold aloft the famine's sting,
Sickness, war and evil things.
Holy Mother Anna!

To thy clients lend thine ear,
Be our guide, repel our foes,
Holy Mother Anna!
May your gracious presence e'er
Round your charge protecting glare.
Holy Mother Anna!

When our life's career is o'er,
Then thy goodness we implore,
Holy Mother Anna!
That with thee, adoring sing:

We to God our homage bring.
Holy Mother Anna!

Hail Thee, Blessed Daughter

Hail thee, blessed daughter
Of God's chosen race,
Mary's faithful mother
by the Lord's fond grace;

Hail, thee, kindly patron
Of the Christian home,
Be its walls of marble,
Or of lowly loam,

Hail thee, holy matron,
Next to Heaven's Queen,
Thou the fairest flower
In the world unseen.

Bless thy loving children
On life's weary way;
Help that all reach heaven
at the end of day.

To Saint Anne

Thou, who in living mother arms
Didst carry Mary, thy sweet child,
Saint Anne give us the love that warms
Our hearts so tepid and defiled.

Thou, who in utter lowliness
Would serve the Lord from day to day,
Saint Anne, we praise thy holiness.
And strive to follow thy blest way.

Thou, who dost love so tenderly
Thy children and thy clients here,
God grant that in eternity.
We'll see thy face so kind and dear.

Apocryphal Works



Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew

Here beginneth the book of the Birth of the Blessed Mary and the Infancy of the Saviour. Written in Hebrew by the Blessed Evangelist Matthew, and translated into Latin by the Blessed Presbyter Jerome.

PREFACE

Letter from Cromatius and Heliodorus to Jerome

To their well-beloved brother Jerome the Presbyter, Bishops Cromatius and Heliodorus in the Lord, greeting.

The birth of the Virgin Mary, and the nativity and infancy of our Lord Jesus Christ, we find in apocryphal books. But considering that in them many things contrary to our faith are written, we have believed that they ought all to be rejected, lest perchance we should transfer the joy of Christ to Antichrist. While, therefore, we were considering these things, there came holy men, Parmenius and Varinus, who said that your Holiness had found a Hebrew volume, written by the hand of the most blessed Evangelist Matthew, in which also the birth of the virgin mother herself, and the infancy of our Saviour, were written. And accordingly we entreat your affection by our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, to render it from the Hebrew into Latin, not so much for the attainment of those things which are the insignia of Christ, as for the exclusion of the craft of heretics, who, in order to teach bad doctrine, have mingled their own lies with the excellent nativity of Christ, that by the sweetness of life they might hide the bitterness of death. It will therefore become your purest piety, either to listen to us as your brethren entreating, or to let us have as bishops exacting, the debt of affection which you may deem due.

Reply to their letter by Jerome

To my lords the holy and most blessed Bishops Cromatius and Heliodorus, Jerome, a humble servant of Christ, in the Lord greeting.

He who digs in ground where he knows that there is gold, does not instantly snatch at whatever the upturned trench may pour forth; but, before the stroke of the quivering spade raises aloft the glittering mass, he meanwhile lingers over the sods to turn them over and lift them up, and especially he who has not added to his gains. An arduous task is enjoined upon me, since what your Blessedness has commanded me, the holy Apostle and Evangelist Matthew himself did not write for the purpose of publishing. For if he had not done it somewhat secretly, he would have added it also to his Gospel which he published. But he composed this book in Hebrew; and so little did he publish it, that at this day the book written in Hebrew by his own hand is in the possession of very religious men, to whom in successive periods of time it has been handed down by those that were before them. And this book they never at any time gave to any one to translate. And so it came to pass, that when it was published by a disciple of Manichaeus named Leucius, who also wrote the falsely styled Acts of the Apostles, this book afforded matter, not of edification, but of perdition; and the opinion of the Synod in regard to it was according to its deserts, that the ears of the Church should not be open to it. Let the snapping of those that bark against us now cease; for we do not add this little book to the canonical writings, but we translate what was written by an Apostle and Evangelist, that we may disclose the falsehood of heresy. In this work, then, we obey the commands of pious bishops as well as oppose impious heretics. It is the love of Christ, therefore, which we fulfil, believing that they will assist us by their prayers, who through our obedience attain to a

knowledge of the holy infancy of our Saviour. There is extant another letter to the same bishops, attributed to Jerome: You ask me to let you know what I think of a book held by some to be about the nativity of Saint Mary. And so I wish you to know that there is much in it that is false. For one Seleucus, who wrote the Sufferings of the Apostles, composed this book. But, just as he wrote what was true about their powers, and the miracles they worked, but said a great deal that was false about their doctrine; so here too he has invented many untruths out of his own head. I shall take care to render it word for word, exactly as it is in the Hebrew, since it is asserted that it was composed by the holy Evangelist Matthew, and written in Hebrew, and set at the head of his Gospel. Whether this be true or not, I leave to the author of the preface and the trustworthiness of the writer: as for myself, I pronounce them doubtful; I do not affirm that they are clearly false. But this I say freely - and I think none of the faithful will deny it - that, whether these stories be true or inventions, the sacred nativity of Saint Mary was preceded by great miracles, and succeeded by the greatest; and so by those who believe that God can do these things, they can be believed and read without damaging their faith or imperilling their souls. In short, so far as I can, following the sense rather than the words of the writer, and sometimes walking in the same path, though not in the same footsteps, sometimes digressing a little, but still keeping the same road, I shall in this way keep by the style of the narrative, and shall say nothing that is not either written there, or might, following the same train of thought, have been written.

THE BOOK

Chapter 1

In those days there was a man in Jerusalem, Joachim by name, of the tribe of Judah. He was the shepherd of his own sheep, fearing the Lord in integrity and singleness of heart. He had no other care than that of his herds, from the produce of which he supplied with food all that feared God, offering double gifts in the fear of God to all who laboured in doctrine, and who ministered unto Him. Therefore his lambs, and his sheep, and his wool, and all things whatsoever he possessed, he used to divide into three portions: one he gave to the orphans, the widows, the strangers, and the poor; the second to those that worshipped God; and the third he kept for himself and all his house. And as he did so, the Lord multiplied to him his herds, so that there was no man like him in the people of Israel. This now he began to do when he was fifteen years old. And at the age of twenty he took to wife Anna, the daughter of Achar, of his own tribe, that is, of the tribe of Judah, of the family of David. And though they had lived together for twenty years, he had by her neither sons nor daughters.

Chapter 2

And it happened that, in the time of the feast, among those who were offering incense to the Lord, Joachim stood getting ready his gifts in the sight of the Lord. And the priest, Ruben by name, coming to him, said: It is not lawful for thee to stand among those who are doing sacrifice to God, because God has not blessed thee so as to give thee seed in Israel. Being therefore put to shame in the sight of the people, he retired from the temple of the Lord weeping, and did not return to his house, but went to his flocks, taking with him his shepherds into the mountains to a far country, so that for five months his wife Anna could hear no tidings of him. And she prayed with tears, saying: O Lord, most mighty God of Israel, why hast Thou, seeing that already Thou hast not given me children, taken from me my husband also? Behold,

now five months that I have not seen my husband; and I know not where he is tarrying; nor, if I knew him to be dead, could I bury him. And while she wept excessively, she entered into the court of His house; and she fell on her face in prayer, and poured out her supplications before the Lord. After this, rising from her prayer, and lifting her eyes to God, she saw a sparrow's nest in a laurel tree, and uttered her voice to the Lord with groaning, and said: Lord God Almighty, who hast given offspring to every creature, to beasts wild and tame, to serpents, and birds, and fishes, and they all rejoice over their young ones, Thou hast shut out me alone from the gift of Thy benignity. For Thou, O God, knowest my heart, that from the beginning of my married life I have vowed that, if Thou, O God, shouldst give me son or daughter, I would offer them to Thee in Thy holy temple. And while she was thus speaking, suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared before her, saying: Be not afraid, Anna, for there is seed for thee in the decree of God; and all generations even to the end shall wonder at that which shall be born of thee. And when he had thus spoken, he vanished out of her sight. But she, in fear and dread because she had seen such a sight, and heard such words, at length went into her bed-chamber, and threw herself on the bed as if dead. And for a whole day and night she remained in great trembling and in prayer. And after these things she called to her her servant, and said to her: Dost thou see me deceived in my widowhood and in great perplexity, and hast thou been unwilling to come in to me? Then she, with a slight murmur, thus answered and said: If God hath shut up thy womb, and hath taken away thy husband from thee, what can I do for thee? And when Anna heard this, she lifted up her voice, and wept aloud.

Chapter 3

At the same time there appeared a young man on the mountains to Joachim while he was feeding his flocks, and said to him: Why dost thou not return to thy wife? And Joachim said: I have had her for twenty years, and it has not been the will of God to give me children by her. I have been driven with shame and reproach from the temple of the Lord: why should I go back to her, when I have been once cast off and utterly despised? Here then will I remain with my sheep; and so long as in this life God is willing to grant me light, I shall willingly, by the hands of my servants, bestow their portions upon the poor, and the orphans, and those that fear God. And when he had thus spoken, the young man said to him: I am an angel of the Lord, and I have to-day appeared to thy wife when she was weeping and praying, and have consoled her; and know that she has conceived a daughter from thy seed, and thou in thy ignorance of this hast left her. She will be in the temple of God, and the Holy Spirit shall abide in her; and her blessedness shall be greater than that of all the holy women, so that no one can say that any before her has been like her, or that any after her in this world will be so. Therefore go down from the mountains, and return to thy wife, whom thou wilt find with child. For God hath raised up seed in her, and for this thou wilt give God thanks; and her seed shall be blessed, and she herself shall be blessed, and shall be made the mother of eternal blessing. Then Joachim adored the angel, and said to him: If I have found favour in thy sight, sit for a little in my tent, and bless thy servant. And the angel said to him: Do not say servant, but fellow-servant; for we are the servants of one Master. But my food is invisible, and my drink cannot be seen by a mortal. Therefore thou oughtest not to ask me to enter thy tent; but if thou wast about to give me anything, offer it as a burnt-offering to the Lord. Then Joachim took a lamb without spot, and said to the angel: I should not have dared to offer a burnt-offering to the Lord, unless thy command had given me the priest's right of offering. And

the angel said to him: I should not have invited thee to offer unless I had known the will of the Lord. And when Joachim was offering the sacrifice to God, the angel and the odour of the sacrifice went together straight up to heaven with the smoke. Then Joachim, throwing himself on his face, lay in prayer from the sixth hour of the day even until evening. And his lads and hired servants who were with him saw him, and not knowing why he was lying down, thought that he was dead; and they came to him, and with difficulty raised him from the ground. And when he recounted to them the vision of the angel, they were struck with great fear and wonder, and advised him to accomplish the vision of the angel without delay, and to go back with all haste to his wife. And when Joachim was turning over in his mind whether he should go back or not, it happened that he was overpowered by a deep sleep; and, behold, the angel who had already appeared to him when awake, appeared to him in his sleep, saying: I am the angel appointed by God as thy guardian: go down with confidence, and return to Anna, because the deeds of mercy which thou and thy wife Anna have done have been told in the presence of the Most High; and to you will God give such fruit as no prophet or saint has ever had from the beginning, or ever will have. And when Joachim awoke out of his sleep, he called all his herdsmen to him, and told them his dream. And they worshipped the Lord, and said to him: See that thou no further despise the words of the angel. But rise and let us go hence, and return at a quiet pace, feeding our flocks. And when, after thirty days occupied in going back, they were now near at hand, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Anna, who was standing and praying, and said: Go to the gate which is called Golden, and meet thy husband in the way, for to-day he will come to thee. She therefore went towards him in haste With her maidens, and, praying to the Lord, she stood a long time in the gate waiting for him. And when she was wearied with long waiting, she lifted up her eyes and saw

Joachim afar off coming with his flocks; and she ran to him and hung on his neck, giving thanks to God, and saying: I was a widow, and behold now I am not so: I was barren, and behold I have now conceived. And so they worshipped the Lord, and went into their own house. And when this was heard of, there was great joy among all their neighbours and acquaintances, so that the whole land of Israel congratulated them.

Chapter 4

After these things, her nine months being fulfilled, Anna brought forth a daughter, and called her Mary. And having weaned her in her third year, Joachim, and Anna his wife, went together to the temple of the Lord to offer sacrifices to God, and placed the infant, Mary by name, in the community of virgins, in which the virgins remained day and night praising God. And when she was put down before the doors of the temple, she went up the fifteen steps so swiftly, that she did not look back at all; nor did she, as children are wont to do, seek for her parents. Whereupon her parents, each of them anxiously seeking for the child, were both alike astonished, until they found her in the temple, and the priests of the temple themselves wondered.

Chapter 5

Then Anna, filled with the Holy Spirit, said before them all: The Lord Almighty, the God of Hosts, being mindful of His word, hath visited His people with a good and holy visitation, to bring down the hearts of the Gentiles who were rising against us, and turn them to Himself. He hath opened His ears to our prayers: He hath kept away from us the exulting of all our enemies. The barren hath become a mother, and hath brought forth exultation and gladness to Israel. Behold the gifts which I have brought to offer to my

Lord, and mine enemies have not been able to hinder me. For God hath turned their hearts to me, and Himself hath given me everlasting joy.

Chapter 6

And Mary was held in admiration by all the people of Israel; and when she was three years old, she walked with a step so mature, she spoke so perfectly, and spent her time so assiduously in the praises of God, that all were astonished at her, and wondered; and she was not reckoned a young infant, but as it were a grown-up person of thirty years old. She was so constant in prayer, and her appearance was so beautiful and glorious, that scarcely any one could look into her face. And she occupied herself constantly with her wool-work, so that she in her tender years could do all that old women were not able to do. And this was the order that she had set for herself: From the morning to the third hour she remained in prayer; from the third to the ninth she was occupied with her weaving; and from the ninth she again applied herself to prayer. She did not retire from praying until there appeared to her the angel of the Lord, from whose hand she used to receive food; and thus she became more and more perfect in the work of God. Then, when the older virgins rested from the praises of God, she did not rest at all; so that in the praises and vigils of God none were found before her, no one more learned in the wisdom of the law of God, more lowly in humility, more elegant in singing, more perfect in all virtue. She was indeed steadfast, immoveable, unchangeable, and daily advancing to perfection. No one saw her angry, nor heard her speaking evil. All her speech was so full of grace, that her God was acknowledged to be in her tongue. She was always engaged in prayer and in searching the law, and she was anxious lest by any word of hers she should sin with regard to her companions. Then she was afraid lest in her laughter, or the

sound of her beautiful voice, she should commit any fault, or lest, being elated, she should display any wrong-doing or haughtiness to one of her equals. She blessed God without intermission; and lest perchance, even in her salutation, she might cease from praising God; if any one saluted her, she used to answer by way of salutation: Thanks be to God. And from her the custom first began of men saying, Thanks be to God, when they saluted each other. She refreshed herself only with the food which she daily received from the hand of the angel; but the food which she obtained from the priests she divided among the poor. The angels of God were often seen speaking with her, and they most diligently obeyed her. If any one who was unwell touched her, the same hour he went home cured.

Chapter 7

Then Abiathar the priest offered gifts without end to the high priests, in order that he might obtain her as wife to his son. But Mary forbade them, saying: It cannot be that I should know a man, or that a man should know me. For all the priests and all her relations kept saying to her: God is worshipped in children and adored in posterity, as has always happened among the sons of Israel. But Mary answered and said unto them: God is worshipped in chastity, as is proved first of all. For before Abel there was none righteous among men, and he by his offerings pleased God, and was without mercy slain by him who displeased Him. Two crowns, therefore, he received — of oblation and of virginity, because in his flesh there was no pollution. Elias also, when he was in the flesh, was taken up in the flesh, because he kept his flesh unspotted. Now I, from my infancy in the temple of God, have learned that virginity can be sufficiently dear to God. And so, because I can offer what is dear to God, I have resolved in my heart that I should not know a man at all.

Chapter 8

Now it came to pass, when she was fourteen years old, and on this account there was occasion for the Pharisees' saying that it was now a custom that no woman of that age should abide in the temple of God, they fell upon the plan of sending a herald through all the tribes of Israel, that on the third day all should come together into the temple of the Lord. And when all the people had come together, Abiathar the high priest rose, and mounted on a higher step, that he might be seen and heard by all the people; and when great silence had been obtained, he said: Hear me, O sons of Israel, and receive my words into your ears. Ever since this temple was built by Solomon, there have been in it virgins, the daughters of kings and the daughters of prophets, and of high priests and priests; and they were great, and worthy of admiration. But when they came to the proper age they were given in marriage, and followed the course of their mothers before them, and were pleasing to God. But a new order of life has been found out by Mary alone, who promises that she will remain a virgin to God. Wherefore it seems to me, that through our inquiry and the answer of God we should try to ascertain to whose keeping she ought to be entrusted. Then these words found favour with all the synagogue. And the lot was east by the priests upon the twelve tribes, and the lot fell upon the tribe of Judah. And the priest said: To-morrow let every one who has no wife come, and bring his rod in his hand. Whence it happened that Joseph brought his rod along with the young men. And the rods having been handed over to the high priest, he offered a sacrifice to the Lord God, and inquired of the Lord. And the Lord said to him: Put all their rods into the holy of holies of God, and let them remain there, and order them to come to thee on the morrow to get back their rods; and the man from the point of whose rod a dove shall come forth, and fly towards heaven, and in whose hand the rod, when

given back, shall exhibit this sign, to him let Mary be delivered to be kept.

On the following day, then, all having assembled early, and an incense-offering having been made, the high priest went into the holy of holies, and brought forth the rods. And when he had distributed the rods, and the dove came forth out of none of them, the high priest put on the twelve bells and the sacerdotal robe; and entering into the holy of holies, he there made a burnt-offering, and poured forth a prayer. And the angel of the Lord appeared to him, saying: There is here the shortest rod, of which thou hast made no account: thou didst bring it in with the rest, but didst not take it out with them. When thou hast taken it out, and hast given it him whose it is, in it will appear the sign of which I spoke to thee. Now that was Joseph's rod; and because he was an old man, he had been cast off, as it were, that he might not receive her, but neither did he himself wish to ask back his rod. And when he was humbly standing last of all, the high priest cried out to him with a loud voice, saying: Come, Joseph, and receive thy rod; for we are waiting for thee. And Joseph came up trembling, because the high priest had called him with a very loud voice. But as soon as he stretched forth his hand, and laid hold of his rod, immediately from the top of it came forth a dove whiter than snow, beautiful exceedingly, which, after long flying about the roofs of the temple, at length flew towards the heavens. Then all the people congratulated the old man, saying: Thou hast been made blessed in thine old age, O father Joseph, seeing that God hath shown thee to be fit to receive Mary. And the priests having said to him, Take her, because of all the tribe of Judah thou alone hast been chosen by God; Joseph began bashfully to address them, saying: I am an old man, and have children; why do you hand over to me this infant, who is younger than my grandsons? Then Abiathar the high priest said to him: Remember, Joseph, how Dathan and

Abiron and Core perished, because they despised the will of God. So will it happen to thee, if thou despise this which is commanded thee by God. Joseph answered him: I indeed do not despise the will of God; but I shall be her guardian until I can ascertain concerning the will of God, as to which of my sons can have her as his wife. Let some virgins of her companions, with whom she may meanwhile spend her time, be given for a consolation to her. Abiathar the high priest answered and said: Five virgins indeed shall be given her for consolation, until the appointed day come in which thou mayst receive her; for to no other can she be joined in marriage.

Then Joseph received Mary, with the other five virgins who were to be with her in Joseph's house. These virgins were Rebecca, Sephora, Susanna, Abigea, and Cael; to whom the high priest gave the silk, and the blue, and the fine linen, and the scarlet, and the purple, and the fine flax. For they cast lots among themselves what each virgin should do, and the purple for the veil of the temple of the Lord fell to the lot of Mary. And when she had got it, those virgins said to her: Since thou art the last, and humble, and younger than all, thou hast deserved to receive and obtain the purple. And thus saying, as it were in words of annoyance, they began to call her queen of virgins. While, however, they were so doing, the angel of the Lord appeared in the midst of them, saying: These words shall not have been uttered by way of annoyance, but prophesied as a prophecy most true. They trembled, therefore, at the sight of the angel, and at his words, and asked her to pardon them, and pray for them.

Chapter 9

And on the second day, while Mary was at the fountain to fill her pitcher, the angel of the Lord appeared to her, saying: Blessed art thou, Mary; for in thy womb thou hast prepared

an habitation for the Lord. For, lo, the light from heaven shall come and dwell in thee, and by means of thee will shine over the whole world.

Again, on the third day, while she was working at the purple with her fingers, there entered a young man of ineffable beauty. And when Mary saw him, she exceedingly feared and trembled. And he said to her: Hail, Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And when she heard these words, she trembled, and was exceedingly afraid. Then the angel of the Lord added: Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found favour with God: Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a King, who fills not only the earth, but the heaven, and who reigns from generation to generation.

Chapter 10

While these things were doing, Joseph was occupied with his work, house-building, in the districts by the sea-shore; for he was a carpenter. And after nine months he came back to his house, and found Mary pregnant. Wherefore, being in the utmost distress, he trembled and cried out, saying: O Lord God, receive my spirit; for it is better for me to die than to live any longer. And the virgins who were with Mary said to him: Joseph, what art thou saying? We know that no man has touched her; we can testify that she is still a virgin, and untouched. We have watched over her; always has she continued with us in prayer; daily do the angels of God speak with her; daily does she receive food from the hand of the Lord. We know not how it is possible that there can be any sin in her. But if thou wishest us to tell thee what we suspect, nobody but the angel of the Lord has made her pregnant. Then said Joseph: Why do you mislead me, to believe that an angel of the Lord has made her pregnant? But it is possible that some one has pretended to be an

angel of the Lord, and has beguiled her. And thus speaking, he wept, and said: With what face shall I look at the temple of the Lord, or with what face shall I see the priests of God? What am I to do? And thus saying, he thought that he would flee, and send her away.

Chapter 11

And when he was thinking of rising up and hiding himself, and dwelling in secret, behold, on that very night, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in sleep, saying: Joseph, thou son of David, fear not; receive Mary as thy wife: for that which is in her womb is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a son, and His name shall be called Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins. And Joseph, rising from his sleep, gave thanks to God, and spoke to Mary and the virgins who were with her, and told them his vision. And he was comforted about Mary, saying: I have sinned, in that I suspected thee at all.

Chapter 12

After these things there arose a great report that Mary was with child. And Joseph was seized by the officers of the temple, and brought along with Mary to the high priest. And he with the priests began to reproach him, and to say: Why hast thou beguiled so great and so glorious a virgin, who was fed like a dove in the temple by the angels of God, who never wished either to see or to have a man, who had the most excellent knowledge of the law of God? If thou hadst not done violence to her, she would still have remained in her virginity. And Joseph vowed, and swore that he had never touched her at all. And Abiathar the high priest answered him: As the Lord liveth, I will give thee to drink of the water of drinking of the Lord, and immediately thy sin will appear.

Then was assembled a multitude of people which could not be numbered, and Mary was brought to the temple. And the priests, and her relatives, and her parents wept, and said to Mary: Confess to the priests thy sin, thou that wast like a dove in the temple of God, and didst receive food from the hands of an angel. And again Joseph was summoned to the altar, and the water of drinking of the Lord was given him to drink. And when any one that had lied drank this water, and walked seven times round the altar, God used to show some sign in his face. When, therefore, Joseph had drunk in safety, and had walked round the altar seven times, no sign of sin appeared in him. Then all the priests, and the officers, and the people justified him, saying: Blessed art thou, seeing that no charge has been found good against thee. And they summoned Mary, and said: And what excuse canst thou have? or what greater sign can appear in thee than the conception of thy womb, which betrays thee? This only we require of thee, that since Joseph is pure regarding thee, thou confess who it is that has beguiled thee. For it is better that thy confession should betray thee, than that the wrath of God should set a mark on thy face, and expose thee in the midst of the people. Then Mary said, stedfastly and without trembling: O Lord God, King over all, who knowest all secrets, if there be any pollution in me, or any sin, or any evil desires, or unchastity, expose me in the sight of all the people, and make me an example of punishment to all. Thus saying, she went up to the altar of the Lord boldly, and drank the water of drinking, and walked round the altar seven times, and no spot was found in her.

And when all the people were in the utmost astonishment, seeing that she was with child, and that no sign had appeared in her face, they began to be disturbed among themselves by conflicting statements: some said that she was holy and unspotted, others that she was wicked and defiled. Then Mary, seeing that she was still suspected by

the people, and that on that account she did not seem to them to be wholly cleared, said in the hearing of all, with a loud voice, As the Lord Adonai liveth, the Lord of Hosts before whom I stand, I have not known man; but I am known by Him to whom from my earliest years I have devoted myself. And this vow I made to my God from my infancy, that I should remain unspotted in Him who created me, and I trust that I shall so live to Him alone, and serve Him alone; and in Him, as long as I shall live, will I remain unpolluted. Then they all began to kiss her feet and to embrace her knees, asking her to pardon them for their wicked suspicions. And she was led down to her house with exultation and joy by the people, and the priests, and all the virgins. And they cried out, and said: Blessed be the name of the Lord for ever, because He hath manifested thy holiness to all His people Israel.

Chapter 13

And it came to pass some little time after, that an enrolment was made according to the edict of Caesar Augustus, that all the world was to be enrolled, each man in his native place. This enrolment was made by Cyrinus, the governor of Syria, It was necessary, therefore, that Joseph should enrol with the blessed Mary in Bethlehem, because to it they belonged, being of the tribe of Judah, and of the house and family of David. When, therefore, Joseph and the blessed Mary were going along the road which leads to Bethlehem, Mary said to Joseph: I see two peoples before me, the one weeping, and the other rejoicing. And Joseph answered: Sit still on thy beast, and do not speak superfluous words. Then there appeared before them a beautiful boy, clothed in white raiment, who said to Joseph: Why didst thou say that the words which Mary spoke about the two peoples were superfluous? For she saw the people of the Jews weeping, because they have departed from their God; and the people

of the Gentiles rejoicing, because they have now been added and made near to the Lord, according to that which He promised to our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob: for the time is at hand when in the seed of Abraham all nations shall be blessed.

And when he had thus said, the angel ordered the beast to stand, for the time when she should bring forth was at hand; and he commanded the blessed Mary to come down off the animal, and go into a recess under a cavern, in which there never was light, but always darkness, because the light of day could not reach it. And when the blessed Mary had gone into it, it began to shine with as much brightness as if it were the sixth hour of the day. The light from God so shone in the cave, that neither by day nor night was light wanting as long as the blessed Mary was there. And there she brought forth a son, and the angels surrounded Him when He was being born. And as soon as He was born, He stood upon His feet, and the angels adored Him, saying: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good pleasure. Now, when the birth of the Lord was at hand, Joseph had gone away to seek midwives. And when he had found them, he returned to the cave, and found with Mary the infant which she had brought forth. And Joseph said to the blessed Mary: I have brought thee two midwives-Zelomi and Salome; and they are standing outside before the entrance to the cave, not daring to come in hither, because of the exceeding brightness. And when the blessed Mary heard this, she smiled; and Joseph said to her: Do not smile; but prudently allow them to visit thee, in case thou shouldst require them for thy cure. Then she ordered them to enter. And when Zelomi had come in, Salome having stayed without, Zelomi said to Mary: Allow me to touch thee. And when she had permitted her to make an examination, the midwife cried out with a loud voice, and said: Lord, Lord Almighty, mercy on us! It has never been heard or thought

of, that any one should have her breasts full of milk, and that the birth of a son should show his mother to be a virgin. But there has been no spilling of blood in his birth, no pain in bringing him forth. A virgin has conceived, a virgin has brought forth, and a virgin she remains. And hearing these words, Salome said: Allow me to handle thee, and prove whether Zelomi have spoken the truth. And the blessed Mary allowed her to handle her. And when she had withdrawn her hand from handling her, it dried up, and through excess of pain she began to weep bitterly, and to be in great distress, crying out, and saying: O Lord God, Thou knowest that I have always feared Thee, and that without recompense I have cared for all the poor; I have taken nothing from the widow and the orphan, and the needy have I not sent empty away. And, behold, I am made wretched because of mine unbelief, since without a cause I wished to try Thy virgin.

And while she was thus speaking, there stood by her a young man in shining garments, saying: Go to the child, and adore Him, and touch Him with thy hand, and He will heal thee, because He is the Saviour of the world, and of all that hope in Him. And she went to the child with haste, and adored Him, and touched the fringe of the cloths in which He was wrapped, and instantly her hand was cured. And going forth, she began to cry aloud, and to tell the wonderful things which she had seen, and which she had suffered, and how she had been cured; so that many through her statements believed.

And some shepherds also affirmed that they had seen angels singing a hymn at midnight, praising and blessing the God of heaven, and saying: There has been born the Saviour of all, who is Christ the Lord, in whom salvation shall be brought back to Israel.

Moreover, a great star, larger than any that had been seen since the beginning of the world, shone over the cave from the evening till the morning. And the prophets who were in Jerusalem said that this star pointed out the birth of Christ, who should restore the promise not only to Israel, but to all nations.

Chapter 14

And on the third day after the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, the most blessed Mary went forth out of the cave, and entering a stable, placed the child in the stall, and the ox and the ass adored Him. Then was fulfilled that which was said by Isaiah the prophet, saying: The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib. The very animals, therefore, the ox and the ass, having Him in their midst, incessantly adored Him. Then was fulfilled that which was said by Abacuc the prophet, saying: Between two animals thou art made manifest. In the same place Joseph remained with Mary three days.

Chapter 15

And on the sixth day they entered Bethlehem, where they spent the seventh day. And on the eighth day they circumcised the child, and called His name Jesus; for so He was called by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. Now, after the days of the purification of Mary were fulfilled according to the law of Moses, then Joseph took the infant to the temple of the Lord. And when the infant had received parhithomus, -parhithomus, that is, circumcision- they offered for Him a pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons.

Now there was in the temple a man of God, perfect and just, whose name was Symeon, a hundred and twelve years old.

He had received the answer from the Lord, that he should not taste of death till he had seen Christ, the Son of God, living in the flesh. And having seen the child, he cried out with a loud voice, saying: God hath visited His people, and the Lord hath fulfilled His promise. And he made haste, and adored Him. And after this he took Him up into his cloak and kissed His feet, and said: Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared before the face of all peoples, to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people Israel.

There was also in the temple of the Lord, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher, who had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity; and she had now been a widow eighty-four years. And she never left the temple of the Lord, but spent her time in fasting and prayer. She also likewise adored the child, saying: In Him is the redemption of the world.

Chapter 16

And when the second year was past, Magi came from the east to Jerusalem, bringing great gifts. And they made strict inquiry of the Jews, saying: Where is the king who has been born to you? for we have seen his star in the east, and have come to worship him. And word of this came to King Herod, and so alarmed him that he called together the scribes and the Pharisees, and the teachers of the people, asking of them where the prophets had foretold that Christ should be born. And they said: In Bethlehem of Judah. For it is written: And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art by no means the least among the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come forth a Leader who shall rule my people Israel. Then King Herod summoned the magi to him, and strictly inquired of them when the star appeared to them. Then, sending

them to Bethlehem, he said: Go and make strict inquiry about the child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. And while the magi were going on their way, there appeared to them the star, which was, as it were, a guide to them, going before them until they came to where the child was. And when the magi saw the star, they rejoiced with great joy; and going into the house, they saw the child Jesus sitting in His mother's lap. Then they opened their treasures, and presented great gifts to the blessed Mary and Joseph. And to the child Himself they offered each of them a piece of gold. And likewise one gave gold, another frankincense, and the third myrrh. And when they were going to return to King Herod, they were warned by an angel in their sleep not to go back to Herod; and they returned to their own country by another road.

Chapter 17

And when Herod saw that he had been made sport of by the magi, his heart swelled with rage, and he sent through all the roads, wishing to seize them and put them to death. But when he could not find them at all; he sent anew to Bethlehem and all its borders, and slew all the male children whom he found of two years old and under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the magi.

Now the day before this was done Joseph was warned in his sleep by the angel of the Lord, who said to him: Take Mary and the child, and go into Egypt by the way of the desert. And Joseph went according to the saying of the angel.

Chapter 18

And having come to a certain cave, and wishing to rest in it, the blessed Mary dismounted from her beast, and sat down

with the child Jesus in her bosom. And there were with Joseph three boys, and with Mary a girl, going on the journey along with them. And, lo, suddenly there came forth from the cave many dragons; and when the children saw them, they cried out in great terror. Then Jesus went down from the bosom of His mother, and stood on His feet before the dragons; and they adored Jesus, and thereafter retired. Then was fulfilled that which was said by David the prophet, saying: Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons; ye dragons, and all ye deeps And the young child Jesus, walking before them, commanded them to hurt no man. But Mary and Joseph were very much afraid lest the child should be hurt by the dragons. And Jesus said to them: Do not be afraid, and do not consider me to be a little child; for I am and always have been perfect; and all the beasts of the forest must needs be tame before me.

Chapter 19

Lions and panthers adored Him likewise, and accompanied them in the desert. Wherever Joseph and the blessed Mary went, they went before them showing them the way, and bowing their heads; and showing their submission by wagging their tails, they adored Him with great reverence. Now at first, when Mary saw the lions and the panthers, and various kinds of wild beasts, coming about them, she was very much afraid. But the infant Jesus looked into her face with a joyful countenance, and said: Be not afraid, mother; for they come not to do thee harm, but they make haste to serve both thee and me. With these words He drove all fear from her heart. And the lions kept walking with them, and with the oxen, and the asses, and the beasts of burden which carried their baggage, and did not hurt a single one of them, though they kept beside them; but they were tame among the sheep and the rams which they had brought with them from Judaea, and which they had with them. They

walked among wolves, and feared nothing; and no one of them was hurt by another. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by the prophet: Wolves shall feed with lambs; the lion and the ox shall eat straw together. There were together two oxen drawing a waggon with provision for the journey, and the lions directed them in their path.

Chapter 20

And it came to pass on the third day of their journey, while they were walking, that the blessed Mary was fatigued by the excessive heat of the sun in the desert; and seeing a palm tree, she said to Joseph: Let me rest a little under the shade of this tree. Joseph therefore made haste, and led her to the palm, and made her come down from her beast. And as the blessed Mary was sitting there, she looked up to the foliage of the palm, and saw it full of fruit, and said to Joseph: I wish it were possible to get some of the fruit of this palm. And Joseph said to her: I wonder that thou sayest this, when thou seest how high the palm tree is; and that thou thinkest of eating of its fruit. I am thinking more of the want of water, because the skins are now empty, and we have none wherewith to refresh ourselves and our cattle. Then the child Jesus, with a joyful countenance, reposing in the bosom of His mother, said to the palm: O tree, bend thy branches, and refresh my mother with thy fruit. And immediately at these words the palm bent its top down to the very feet of the blessed Mary; and they gathered from it fruit, with which they were all refreshed. And after they had gathered all its fruit, it remained bent down, waiting the order to rise from Him who had commanded it to stoop. Then Jesus said to it: Raise thyself, O palm tree, and be strong, and be the companion of my trees, which are in the paradise of my Father; and open from thy roots a vein of water which has been hid in the earth, and let the waters flow, so that we may be satisfied from thee. And it rose up immediately, and

at its root there began to come forth a spring of water exceedingly clear and cool and sparkling. And when they saw the spring of water, they rejoiced with great joy, and were satisfied, themselves and all their cattle and their beasts. Wherefore they gave thanks to God.

Chapter 21

And on the day after, when they were setting out thence, and in the hour in which they began their journey, Jesus turned to the palm, and said: This privilege I give thee, O palm tree, that one of thy branches be carried away by my angels, and planted in the paradise of my Father. And this blessing I will confer upon thee, that it shall be said of all who conquer in any contest, You have attained the palm of victory. And while He was thus speaking, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared, and stood upon the palm tree; and taking off one of its branches, flew to heaven with the branch in his hand. And when they saw this, they fell on their faces, and became as it were dead. And Jesus said to them: Why are your hearts possessed with fear? Do you not know that this palm, which I have caused to be transferred to paradise, shall be prepared for all the saints in the place of delights, as it has been prepared for us in this place of the wilderness? And they were filled with joy; and being strengthened, they all rose up.

Chapter 22

After this, while they were going on their journey, Joseph said to Jesus: Lord, it is a boiling heat; if it please Thee, let us go by the sea-shore, that we may be able to rest in the cities on the coast. Jesus said to him: Fear not, Joseph; I will shorten the way for you, so that what you would have taken thirty days to go over, you shall accomplish in this one day.

And while they were thus speaking, behold, they looked forward, and began to see the mountains and cities of Egypt.

And rejoicing and exulting, they came into the regions of Hermopolis, and entered into a certain city of Egypt which is called Sotinen; and because they knew no one there from whom they could ask hospitality, they went into a temple which was called the Capitol of Egypt. And in this temple there had been set up three hundred and fifty-five idols, to each of which on its own day divine honours and sacred rites were paid. For the Egyptians belonging to the same city entered the Capitol, in which the priests told them how many sacrifices were offered each day, according to the honour in which the god was held.

Chapter 23

And it came to pass, when the most blessed Mary went into the temple with the little child, that all the idols prostrated themselves on the ground, so that all of them were lying on their faces shattered and broken to pieces; and thus they plainly showed that they were nothing. Then was fulfilled that which was said by the prophet Isaiah: Behold, the Lord will come upon a swift cloud, and will enter Egypt, and all the handiwork of the Egyptians shall be moved at His presence.

Chapter 24

Then Affrodosius, that governor of the city, when news of this was brought to him, went to the temple with all his army. And the priests of the temple, when they saw Affrodosius with all his army coming into the temple, thought that he was making haste only to see vengeance taken on those on whose account the gods had fallen down. But when he came into the temple, and saw all the gods

lying prostrate on their faces, he went up to the blessed Mary, who was carrying the Lord in her bosom, and adored Him, and said to all his army and all his friends: Unless this were the God of our gods, our gods would not have fallen on their faces before Him; nor would they be lying prostrate in His presence: wherefore they silently confess that He is their Lord. Unless we, therefore, take care to do what we have seen our gods doing, we may run the risk of His anger, and all come to destruction, even as it happened to Pharaoh king of the Egyptians, who, not believing in powers so mighty, was drowned in the sea, with all his army. Then all the people of that same city believed in the Lord God through Jesus Christ.

Chapter 25

After no long time the angel said to Joseph: Return to the land of Judah, for they are dead who sought the child's life.

Chapter 26

And it came to pass, after Jesus had returned out of Egypt, when He was in Galilee, and entering on the fourth year of His age, that on a Sabbath-day He was playing with some children at the bed of the Jordan. And as He sat there, Jesus made to Himself seven pools of clay, and to each of them He made passages, through which at His command He brought water from the torrent into the pool, and took it back again. Then one of those children, a son of the devil, moved with envy, shut the passages which supplied the pools with water, and overthrew what Jesus had built up. Then said Jesus to him: Woe unto thee, thou son of death, thou son of Satan! Dost thou destroy the works which I have wrought? And immediately he who had done this died. Then with great uproar the parents of the dead boy cried out against Mary and Joseph, saying to them: Your son has cursed our

son, and he is dead. And when Joseph and Mary heard this, they came forthwith to Jesus, on account of the outcry of the parents of the boy, and the gathering together of the Jews. But Joseph said privately to Mary: I dare not speak to Him; but do thou admonish Him, and say: Why hast Thou raised against us the hatred of the people; and why must the troublesome hatred of men be borne by us? And His mother having come to Him, asked Him, saying: My Lord, what was it that he did to bring about his death? And He said: He deserved death, because he scattered the works that I had made. Then His mother asked Him, saying: Do not so, my Lord, because all men rise up against us. But He, not wishing to grieve His mother, with His right foot kicked the hinder parts of the dead boy, and said to him: Rise, thou son of iniquity for thou art not worthy to enter into the rest of my Father, because thou didst destroy the works which I had made. Then he who had been dead rose up, and went away. And Jesus, by the word of His power, brought water into the pools by the aqueduct.

Chapter 27

And it came to pass, after these things, that in the sight of all Jesus took clay froth the pools which He had made, and of it made twelve sparrows. And it was the Sabbath when Jesus did this, and there were very many children with Him. When, therefore, one of the Jews had seen Him doing this, he said to Joseph: Joseph, dost thou not see the child Jesus working on the Sabbath at what it is not lawful for him to do? for he has made twelve sparrows of clay. And when Joseph heard this, he reprov'd him, saying: Wherefore doest thou on the Sabbath such things as are not lawful for us to do? And when Jesus heard Joseph, He struck His hands together, and said to His sparrows: Fly! And at the voice of His command they began to fly. And in the sight and hearing of all that stood by, He said to the birds: Go and fly through the earth,

and through all the world, and live. And when those that were there saw such miracles, they were filled with great astonishment.

And some praised and admired Him, but others reviled Him. And certain of them went away to the chief priests and the heads of the Pharisees, and reported to them that Jesus the son of Joseph had done great signs and miracles in the sight of all the people of Israel. And this was reported in the twelve tribes of Israel.

Chapter 28

And again the son of Annas, a priest of the temple, who had come with Joseph, holding his rod in his hand in the sight of all, with great fury broke down the dams which Jesus had made with His own hands, and let out the water which He had collected in them from the torrent. Moreover, he shut the aqueduct by which the water came in, and then broke it down. And when Jesus saw this, He said to that boy who had destroyed His dams: O most wicked seed of iniquity! O son of death! O workshop of Satan! verily the fruit of thy seed shall be without strength, and thy roots without moisture, and thy branches withered, bearing no fruit. And immediately, in the sight of all, the boy withered away, and died.

Chapter 29

Then Joseph trembled, and took hold of Jesus, and went with Him to his own house, and His mother with Him. And, behold, suddenly from the opposite direction a boy, also a worker of iniquity, ran up and came against the shoulder of Jesus, wishing to make sport of Him, or to hurt Him, if he could. And Jesus said to him: Thou shall not go back safe and sound from the way that thou goest. And immediately

he fell down, and died. And the parents of the dead boy, who had seen what happened, cried out, saying: Where does this child come from? It is manifest that every word that he says is true; and it is often accomplished before he speaks. And the parents of the dead boy came to Joseph, and said to him: Take away that Jesus from this place, for he cannot live with us in this town; or at least teach him to bless, and not to curse. And Joseph came up to Jesus, and admonished Him, saying: Why doest thou such things? For already many are in grief and against thee, and hate us on thy account, and we endure the reproaches of men because of thee. And Jesus answered and said unto Joseph: No one is a wise son but he whom his father hath taught, according to the knowledge of this time; and a father's curse can hurt none but evil-doers. Then they came together against Jesus, and accused him to Joseph. When Joseph saw this, he was in great terror, fearing the violence and uproar of the people of Israel. And the same hour Jesus seized the dead boy by the ear, and lifted him up from the earth in the sight of all: and they saw Jesus speaking to him like a father to his son. And his spirit came back to him, and he revived. And all of them wondered.

Chapter 30

Now a certain Jewish schoolmaster named Zachyas heard Jesus thus speaking; and seeing that He could not be overcome, from knowing the power that was in Him, he became angry, and began rudely and foolishly, and without fear, to speak against Joseph. And he said: Dost thou not wish to entrust me with thy son, that he may be instructed in human learning and in reverence? But I see that Mary and thyself have more regard for your son than for what the elders of the people of Israel say against him. You should have given more honour to us, the elders of the whole church of Israel, both that he might be on terms of mutual affection with the children, and that among us he might be

instructed in Jewish learning. Joseph, on the other hand, said to him: And is there any one who can keep this child, and teach him? But if thou canst keep him and teach him, we by no means hinder him from being taught by thee those things which are learned by all. And Jesus, having heard what Zacharyas had said, answered and said unto him: The precepts of the law which thou hast just spoken of, and all the things that thou hast named, must be kept by those who are instructed in human learning; but I am a stranger to your law-courts, because I have no father after the flesh. Thou who readest the law, and art learned in it, abidest in the law; but I was before the law, But since thou thinkest that no one is equal to thee in learning, thou shalt be taught by me, that no other can teach anything but those things which thou hast named. But he alone can who is worthy. For when I shall be exalted on earth, I will cause to cease all mention of your genealogy. For thou knowest not when thou wast born: I alone know when you were born, and how long your life on earth will be. Then all who heard these words were struck with astonishment, and cried out: Oh! oh! oh! this marvellously great and wonderful mystery. Never have we heard the like! Never has it been heard from any one else, nor has it been said or at any time heard by the prophets, or the Pharisees, or the scribes. We know whence he is sprung, and he is scarcely five years old; and whence does he speak these words? The Pharisees answered: We have never heard such words spoken by any other child so young. And Jesus answered and said unto them: At this do ye wonder, that such things are said by a child? Why, then, do ye not believe me in those things which I have said to you? And you all wonder because I said to you that I know when you were born. I will tell you greater things, that you may wonder more. I have seen Abraham, whom you call your father, and have spoken with him; and he has seen me. And when they heard this they held their tongues, nor did any of them dare to speak. And Jesus said to them: I have been among you

with children, and you have not known me; I have spoken to you as to wise men, and you have not understood my words; because you are younger than I am, and of little faith.

Chapter 31

A second time the master Zachyas, doctor of the law, said to Joseph and Mary: Give me the boy, and I shall hand him over to master Levi, who shall teach him his letters and instruct him. Then Joseph and Mary, soothing Jesus, took Him to the schools, that He might be taught His letters by old Levi. And as soon as He went in He held His tongue. And the master Levi said one letter to Jesus, and, beginning from the first letter Aleph, said to Him: Answer. But Jesus was silent, and answered nothing. Wherefore the preceptor Levi was angry, and seized his storax-tree rod, and struck Him on the head. And Jesus said to the teacher Levi: Why dost thou strike me? Thou shall know in truth, that He who is struck can teach him who strikes Him more than He can be taught by him. For I can teach you those very things that yon are saying. But all these are blind who speak and hear, like sounding brass or tinkling cymbal, in which there is no perception of those things which are meant by their sound. And Jesus in addition said to Zachyas: Every letter from Aleph even to Thet is known by its arrangement. Say thou first, therefore, what Thet is, and I will tell thee what Aleph is. And again Jesus said to them: Those who do not know Aleph, how can they say Thet, the hypocrites? Tell me what the first one, Aleph, is; and I shall then believe you when you have said Beth. And Jesus began to ask the names of the letters one by one, and said: Let the master of the law tell us what the first letter is, or why it has many triangles, gradate, subacute, mediate, obduced, produced, erect, prostrate, curvistrate. And when Levi heard this, he was thunderstruck at such an arrangement of the names of the letters. Then he began in the heating of all to cry out, and say: Ought such a one to

live on the earth? Yea, he ought to be hung on the great cross. For he can put out fire, and make sport of other modes of punishment. I think that he lived before the flood, and was born before the deluge. For what womb bore him? or what mother brought him forth? or what breasts gave him suck? I flee before him; I am not able to withstand the words from his mouth, but my heart is astounded to hear such words. I do not think that any man can understand what he says, except God were with him. Now I, unfortunate wretch, have given myself up to be a laughing-stock to him. For when I thought I had a scholar, I, not knowing him, have found my master. What shall I say? I cannot withstand the words of this child: I shall now flee from this town, because I cannot understand them. An old man like me has been beaten by a boy, because I can find neither beginning nor end of what he says. For it is no easy matter to find a beginning of himself. I tell you of a certainty, I am not lying, that to my eyes the proceedings of this boy, the commencement of his conversation, and the upshot of his intention, seem to have nothing in common with mortal man. Here then I do not know whether he be a wizard or a god; or at least an angel of God speaks in him. Whence he is, or where he comes from, or who he will turn out to be, I know not. Then Jesus, smiling at him with a joyful countenance, said in a commanding voice to all the sons of Israel standing by and hearing: Let the unfruitful bring forth fruit, and the blind see, and the lame walk right, and the poor enjoy the good things of this life, and the dead live, that each may return to his original state, and abide in Him who is the root of life and of perpetual sweetness. And when the child Jesus had said this, forthwith all who had fallen under malignant diseases were restored. And they did not dare to say anything more to Him, or to hear anything from Him.

Chapter 32

After these things, Joseph and Mary departed thence with Jesus into the city of Nazareth; and He remained there with His parents. And on the first of the week, when Jesus was playing with the children on the roof of a certain house, it happened that one of the children pushed another down from the roof to the ground, and he was killed. And the parents of the dead boy, who had not seen this, cried out against Joseph and Mary, saying: Your son has thrown our son down to the ground, and he is dead. But Jesus was silent, and answered them nothing. And Joseph and Mary came in haste to Jesus.; and His mother asked Him, saying: My lord, tell me if thou didst throw him down. And immediately Jesus went down from the roof to the ground, and called the boy by his name, Zeno. And he answered Him: My lord. And Jesus said to him: Was it I that threw thee down from the roof to the ground? And he said: No, my lord. And the parents of the boy who had been dead wondered, and honoured Jesus for the miracle that had been wrought. And Joseph and Mary departed thence with Jesus to Jericho.

Chapter 33

Now Jesus was six years old, and His mother sent Him with a pitcher to the fountain to draw water with the children. And it came to pass, after He had drawn the water, that one of the children came against Him, and struck the pitcher, and broke it. But Jesus stretched out the cloak which He had on, and took up in His cloak as much water as there had been in the pitcher, and carried it to His mother. And when she saw it she wondered, and reflected within herself, and laid up all these things in her heart.

Chapter 34

Again, on a certain day, He went forth into the field, and took a little wheat from His mother's barn, and sowed it

Himself. And it sprang up, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly. And at last it came to pass that He Himself reaped it, and gathered as the produce of it three kors, and gave it to His numerous acquaintances.

Chapter 35

There is a road going out of Jericho and leading to the river Jordan, to the place where the children of Israel crossed: and there the ark of the covenant is said to have rested. And Jesus was eight years old, and He went out of Jericho, and went towards the Jordan. And there was beside the road, near the bank of the Jordan, a cave where a lioness was nursing her cubs; and no one was safe to walk that way. Jesus then, coming from Jericho, and knowing that in that cave the lioness had brought forth her young, went into it in the sight of all. And when the lions saw Jesus, they ran to meet Him, and adored Him. And Jesus was sitting in the cavern, and the lion's cubs ran hither and thither round His feet, fawning upon Him, and sporting. And the older lions, with their heads bowed down, stood at a distance, and adored Him, and fawned upon Him with their tails. Then the people who were standing afar off, not seeing Jesus, said: Unless he or his parents had committed grievous sins, he would not of his own accord have offered himself up to the lions. And when the people were thus reflecting within themselves, and were lying under great sorrow, behold, on a sudden, in the sight of the people, Jesus came out of the cave, and the lions went before Him, and the lion's cubs played with each other before His feet. And the parents of Jesus stood afar off, with their heads bowed down, and watched; likewise also the people stood at a distance, on account of the lions; for they did not dare to come close to them. Then Jesus began to say to the people: How much better are the beasts than you, seeing that they recognise their Lord, and glorify Him; while you men, who have been

made after the image and likeness of God, do not know Him! Beasts know me, and are tame; men see me, and do not acknowledge me.

Chapter 36

After these things Jesus crossed the Jordan, in the sight of them all, with the lions; and the water of the Jordan was divided on the right hand and on the left. Then He said to the lions, in the hearing of all: Go in peace, and hurt no one; but neither let man injure you, until you return to the place whence you have come forth. And they, bidding Him farewell, not only with their gestures but with their voices, went to their own place. But Jesus returned to His mother.

Chapter 37

Now Joseph was a carpenter, and used to make nothing else of wood but ox-yokes, and ploughs, and implements of husbandry, and wooden beds. And it came to pass that a certain young man ordered him to make for him a couch six cubits long. And Joseph commanded his servant to cut the wood with an iron saw, according to the measure which he had sent. But he did not keep to the prescribed measure, but made one piece of wood shorter than the other. And Joseph was in perplexity, and began to consider what he was to do about this. And when Jesus saw him in this state of cogitation, seeing that it was a matter of impossibility to him, He addresses him with words of comfort, saying: Come, let us take hold of the ends of the pieces of wood, and let us put them together, end to end, and let us fit them exactly to each other, and draw to us, for we shall be able to make them equal. Then Joseph did what he was bid, for he knew that He could do whatever He wished. And Joseph took hold of the ends of the pieces of wood, and brought them together against the wall next himself, and Jesus took hold

of the other ends of the pieces of wood, and drew the shorter piece to Him, and made it of the same length as the longer one. And He said to Joseph: Go and work, and do what thou hast promised to do. And Joseph did what he had promised.

Chapter 38

And it came to pass a second time, that Joseph and Mary were asked by the people that Jesus should be taught His letters in school. They did not refuse to do so; and according to the commandment of the elders, they took Him to a master to be instructed in human learning. Then the master began to teach Him in an imperious tone, saying: Say Alpha. And Jesus said to him: Do thou tell me first what Betha is, and I will tell thee what Alpha is. And upon this the master got angry and struck Jesus; and no sooner had he struck Him, than he fell down dead.

And Jesus went home again to His mother. And Joseph, being afraid, called Mary to him, and said to her: Know of a surety that my soul is sorrowful even unto death on account of this child. For it is very likely that at some time or other some one will strike him in malice, and he will die. But Mary answered and said: O man of God! do not believe that this is possible. You may believe to a certainty that He who has sent him to be born among men will Himself guard him from all mischief, and will in His own name preserve him from evil.

Chapter 39

Again the Jews asked Mary and Joseph a third time to coax Him to go to another master to learn. And Joseph and Mary, fearing the people, and the overbearing of the princes, and the threats of the priests, led Him again to school, knowing that He could learn nothing from man, because He had

perfect knowledge from God only. And when Jesus had entered the school, led by the Holy Spirit, He took the book out of the hand of the master who was teaching the law, and in the sight and hearing of all the people began to read, not indeed what was written in their book; but He spoke in the Spirit of the living God, as if a stream of water were gushing forth from a living fountain, and the fountain remained always full. And with such power He taught the people the great things of the living God, that the master himself fell to the ground and adored Him. And the heart of the people who sat and heard Him saying such things was turned into astonishment. And when Joseph heard of this, he came running to Jesus, fearing that the master himself was dead. And when the master saw him, he said to him: Thou hast given me not a scholar, but a master; and who can withstand his words? Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by the Psalmist: The river of God is full of water: Thou hast prepared them corn, for so is the provision for it.

Chapter 40

After these things Joseph departed thence with Mary and Jesus to go into Capernaum by the seashore, on account of the malice of his adversaries. And when Jesus was living in Capernaum, there was in the city a man named Joseph, exceedingly rich. But he had wasted away under his infirmity, and died, and was lying dead in his couch. And when Jesus heard them in the city mourning, and weeping, and lamenting over the dead man, He said to Joseph: Why dost thou not afford the benefit of thy favour to this man, seeing that he is called by thy name? And Joseph answered him: How have I any power or ability to afford him a benefit? And Jesus said to him: Take the handkerchief which is upon thy head, and go and put it on the face of the dead man, and say to him: Christ heal thee; and immediately the dead man will be healed, and will rise from his couch. And when

Joseph heard this, he went away at the command of Jesus, and ran, and entered the house of the dead man, and put the handkerchief which he was wearing on his head upon the face of him who was lying in the couch, and said: Jesus heal thee. And forthwith the dead man rose from his bed, and asked who Jesus was.

Chapter 41

And they went away from Capernaum into the city which is called Bethlehem; and Joseph lived with Mary in his own house, and Jesus with them. And on a certain day Joseph called to him his first-born son James, and sent him into the vegetable garden to gather vegetables for the purpose of making broth. And Jesus followed His brother James into the garden; but Joseph and Mary did not know this. And while James was collecting the vegetables, a viper suddenly came out of a hole and struck his hand, and he began to cry out from excessive pain. And, becoming exhausted, he said, with a bitter cry: Alas! alas! an accursed viper has struck my hand. And Jesus, who was standing opposite to him, at the bitter cry ran up to James, and took hold of his hand; and all that He did was to blow on the hand of James, and cool it: and immediately James was healed, and the serpent died. And Joseph and Mary did not know what had been done; but at the cry of James, and the command of Jesus, they ran to the garden, and found the serpent already dead, and James quite cured.

Chapter 42

And Joseph having come to a feast with his sons, James, Joseph, and Judah, and Simeon and his two daughters, Jesus met them, with Mary His mother, along with her sister Mary of Cleophas, whom the Lord God had given to her father Cleophas and her mother Anna, because they had offered

Mary the mother of Jesus to the Lord. And she was called by the same name, Mary, for the consolation of her parents. And when they had come together, Jesus sanctified and blessed them, and He was the first to begin to eat and drink; for none of them dared to eat or drink, or to sit at table, or to break bread, until He had sanctified them, and first done so. And if He happened to be absent, they used to wait until He should do this. And when He did not wish to come for refreshment, neither Joseph nor Mary, nor the sons of Joseph, His brothers, came. And, indeed, these brothers, keeping His life as a lamp before their eyes, observed Him, and feared Him. And when Jesus slept, whether by day or by night, the brightness of God shone upon Him. To whom be all praise and glory for ever and ever. Amen, amen.

Protoevangelium of James

On The Birth of Mary the Holy Mother of God, and Very Glorious Mother of Jesus Christ

1. In the records of the twelve tribes of Israel was Joachim, a man rich exceedingly; and he brought his offerings double, saying: There shall be of my superabundance to all the people, and there shall be the offering for my forgiveness to the Lord for a propitiation for me. For the great day of the Lord was at hand, and the sons of Israel were bringing their offerings. And there stood over against him Rubim, saying: It is not meet for thee first to bring thine offerings, because thou hast not made seed in Israel. And Joachim was exceedingly grieved, and went away to the registers of the twelve tribes of the people, saying: I shall see the registers of the twelve tribes of Israel, as to whether I alone have not made seed in Israel. And he searched, and found that all the righteous had raised up seed in Israel. And he called to mind the patriarch Abraham, that in the last day God gave him a son Isaac. And Joachim was exceedingly grieved, and did not come into the presence of his wife; but he retired to the desert, and there pitched his tent, and fasted forty days and forty nights, saying in himself: I will not go down either for food or for drink until the Lord my God shall look upon me, and prayer shall be my food and drink.



2. And his wife Anna mourned in two mournings, and lamented in two lamentations, saying: I shall bewail my

widowhood; I shall bewail my childlessness. And the great day of the Lord was at hand; and Judith her maid-servant said: How long dost thou humiliate thy soul? Behold, the great day of the Lord is at hand, and it is unlawful for thee to mourn. But take this head-band, which the woman that made it gave to me; for it is not proper that I should wear it, because I am a maid-servant, and it has a royal appearance. And Anna said: Depart from me; for I have not done such things, and the Lord has brought me very low. I fear that some wicked person has given it to thee, and thou hast come to make me a sharer in thy sin. And Judith said: Why should I curse thee, seeing that the Lord hath shut thy womb, so as not to give thee fruit in Israel? And Anna was grieved exceedingly, and put off her garments of mourning, and cleaned her head, and put on her wedding garments, and about the ninth hour went down to the garden to walk. And she saw a laurel, and sat under it, and prayed to the Lord, saying: O God of our fathers, bless me and hear my prayer, as Thou didst bless the womb of Sarah, and didst give her a son Isaac.

3. And gazing towards the heaven, she saw a sparrow's nest in the laurel, and made a lamentation in herself, saying: Alas! who begot me? and what womb produced me? because I have become a curse in the presence of the sons of Israel, and I have been reproached, and they have driven me in derision out of the temple of the Lord. Alas! to what have I been likened? I am not like the fowls of the heaven, because even the fowls of the heaven are productive before Thee, O Lord. Alas! to what have I been likened? I am not like the beasts of the earth, because even the beasts of the earth are productive before Thee, O Lord. Alas! to what have I been likened? I am not like these waters, because even these waters are productive before Thee, O Lord. Alas! to what have I been likened? I am not like this earth, because

even the earth bringeth forth its fruits in season, and blesseth Thee, O Lord.

4. And, behold, an angel of the Lord stood by, saying: Anna, Anna, the Lord hath heard thy prayer, and thou shalt conceive, and shall bring forth; and thy seed shall be spoken of in all the world. And Anna said: As the Lord my God liveth, if I beget either male or female, I will bring it as a gift to the Lord my God; and it shall minister to Him in holy things all the days of its life. And, behold, two angels came, saying to her: Behold, Joachim thy husband is coming with his flocks. For an angel of the Lord went down to him, saying: Joachim, Joachim, the Lord God hath heard thy prayer Go down hence; for, behold, thy wife Anna shall conceive. And Joachim went down and called his shepherds, saying: Bring me hither ten she-lambs without spot or blemish, and they shall be for the Lord my God; and bring me twelve tender calves, and they shall be for the priests and the elders; and a hundred goats for all the people. And, behold, Joachim came with his flocks; and Anna stood by the gate, and saw Joachim coming, and she ran and hung upon his neck, saying: Now I know that the Lord God hath blessed me exceedingly; for, behold the widow no longer a widow, and I the childless shall conceive. And Joachim rested the first day in his house.

5. And on the following day he brought his offerings, saying in himself: If the Lord God has been rendered gracious to me, the plate on the priest's forehead will make it manifest to me. And Joachim brought his offerings, and observed attentively the priest's plate when he went up to the altar of the Lord, and he saw no sin in himself. And Joachim said: Now I know that the Lord has been gracious unto me, and has remitted all my sins. And he went down from the temple of the Lord justified, and departed to his own house. And her months were fulfilled, and in the ninth month Anna brought

forth. And she said to the midwife: What have I brought forth? and she said: A girl. And said Anna: My soul has been magnified this day. And she laid her down. And the days having been fulfilled, Anna was purified, and gave the breast to the child, and called her name Mary.

6. And the child grew strong day by day; and when she was six months old, her mother set her on the ground to try whether she could stand, and she walked seven steps and came into her bosom; and she snatched her up, saying: As the Lord my God liveth, thou shall not walk on this earth until I bring thee into the temple of the Lord. And she made a sanctuary in her bed-chamber, and allowed nothing common or unclean to pass through her. And she called the undefiled daughters of the Hebrews, and they led her astray. And when she was a year old, Joachim made a great feast, and invited the priests, and the scribes, and the elders, and all the people of Israel. And Joachim brought the child to the priests; and they blessed her, saying: O God of our fathers, bless this child, and give her an everlasting name to be named in all generations. And all the people said: So be it, so be it, amen. And he brought her to the chief priests; and they blessed her, saying: O God most high, look upon this child, and bless her with the utmost blessing, which shall be for ever. And her mother snatched her up, and took her into the sanctuary of her bed-chamber, and gave her the breast. And Anna made a song to the Lord God, saying: I will sing a song to the Lord my God, for He hath looked upon me, and hath taken away the reproach of mine enemies; and the Lord hath given the the fruit of His righteousness, singular in its kind, and richly endowed before Him. Who will tell the sons of Rubim that Anna gives suck? Hear, hear, ye twelve tribes of Israel, that Anna gives suck. And she laid her to rest in the bed-chamber of her sanctuary, and went out and ministered unto them. And when the supper was ended, they went down rejoicing, and glorifying the God of Israel.

7. And her months were added to the child. And the child was two years old, and Joachim said: Let us take her up to the temple of the Lord, that we may pay the vow that we have vowed, lest perchance the Lord send to us, and our offering be not received. And Anna said: Let us wait for the third year, in order that the child may not seek for father or mother. And Joachim said: So let us wait. And the child was three years old, and Joachim said: Invite the daughters of the Hebrews that are undefiled, and let them take each a lamp, and let them stand with the lamps burning, that the child may not turn back, and her heart be captivated from the temple of the Lord. And they did so until they went up into the temple of the Lord. And the priest received her, and kissed her, and blessed her, saying: The Lord has magnified thy name in all generations. In thee, on the last of the days, the Lord will manifest His redemption to the sons of Israel. And he set her down upon the third step of the altar, and the Lord God sent grace upon her; and she danced with her feet, and all the house of Israel loved her.

8. And her parents went down marvelling, and praising the Lord God, because the child had not turned back. And Mary was in the temple of the Lord as if she were a dove that dwelt there, and she received food from the hand of an angel. And when she was twelve years old there was held a council of the priests, saying: Behold, Mary has reached the age of twelve years in the temple of the Lord. What then shall we do with her, lest perchance she defile the sanctuary of the Lord? And they said to the high priest: Thou standest by the altar of the Lord; go in, and pray concerning her; and whatever the Lord shall manifest unto thee, that also will we do. And the high priest went in, taking the robe with the twelve bells into the holy of holies; and he prayed concerning her. And behold an angel of the Lord stood by him, saying unto him: Zacharias, Zacharias, go out and assemble the widowers of the people, and let them bring

each his rod; and to whomsoever the Lord shall show a sign, his wife shall she be. And the heralds went out through all the circuit of Judaea, and the trumpet of the Lord sounded, and all ran.

9. And Joseph, throwing away his axe, went out to meet them; and when they had assembled, they went away to the high priest, taking with them their rods. And he, taking the rods of all of them, entered into the temple, and prayed; and having ended his prayer, he took the rods and came out, and gave them to them: but there was no sign in them, and Joseph took his rod last; and, behold, a dove came out of the rod, and flew upon Joseph's head. And the priest said to Joseph, Thou hast been chosen by lot to take into thy keeping the virgin of the Lord. But Joseph refused, saying: I have children, and I am an old man, and she is a young girl. I am afraid lest I become a laughing-stock to the sons of Israel. And the priest said to Joseph: Fear the Lord thy God, and remember what the Lord did to Dathan, and Abiram, and Korah; how the earth opened, and they were swallowed up on account of their contradiction. And now fear, O Joseph, lest the same things happen in thy house. And Joseph was afraid, and took her into his keeping. And Joseph said to Mary: Behold, I have received thee from the temple of the Lord; and now I leave thee in my house, and go away to build my buildings, and I shall come to thee. The Lord will protect thee.

10. And there was a council of the priests, saying: Let us make a veil for the temple of the Lord. And the priest said: Call to me the undefiled virgins of the family of David. And the officers went away, and sought, and found seven virgins. And the priest remembered the child Mary, that she was of the family of David, and undefiled before God. And the officers went away and brought her. And they brought them into the temple of the Lord. And the priest said: Choose for

me by lot who shall spin the gold, and the white, and the fine linen, and the silk, and the blue, and the scarlet, and the true purple. And the true purple and the scarlet fell to the lot of Mary, and she took them, and went away to her house. And at that time Zacharias was dumb, and Samuel was in his place until the time that Zacharias spake. And Mary took the scarlet, and span it.

11. And she took the pitcher, and went out to fill it with water. And, behold, a voice saying: Hail, thou who hast received grace; the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women! And she looked round, on the right hand and on the left, to see whence this voice came. And she went away, trembling, to her house, and put down the pitcher; and taking the purple, she sat down on her seat, and drew it out. And, behold, an angel of the Lord stood before her, saying: Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found grace before the Lord of all, and thou shalt conceive, according to His word. And she hearing, reasoned with herself, saying: Shall I conceive by the Lord, the living God? and shall I bring forth as every woman brings forth? And the angel of the Lord said: Not so, Mary; for the power of the Lord shall overshadow thee: wherefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of the Most High. And thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins. And Mary said: Behold, the servant of the Lord before His face: let it be unto me according to thy word.

12. And she made the purple and the scarlet, and took them to the priest. And the priest blessed her, and said: Mary, the Lord God hath magnified thy name, and thou shalt be blessed in all the generations of the earth. And Mary, with great joy, went away to Elizabeth her kinswoman, and knocked at the door. And when Elizabeth heard her, she threw away the scarlet, and ran to the door, and opened it; and seeing Mary, she blessed her, and said: Whence is this

to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? for, behold, that which is in me leaped and blessed thee. But Mary had forgotten the mysteries of which the archangel Gabriel had spoken, and gazed up into heaven, and said: Who am I, O Lord, that all the generations of the earth should bless me? And she remained three months with Elizabeth; and day by day she grew bigger. And Mary being afraid, went away to her own house, and hid herself from the sons of Israel. And she was sixteen years old when these mysteries happened.

13. And she was in her sixth month; and, behold, Joseph came back from his building, and, entering into his house, he discovered that she was big with child. And he smote his face, and threw himself on the ground upon the sackcloth, and wept bitterly, saying: With what face shall I look upon the Lord my God? and what prayer shall I make about this maiden? because I received her a virgin out of the temple of the Lord, and I have not watched over her. Who is it that has hunted me down? Who has done this evil thing in my house, and defiled the virgin? Has not the history of Adam been repeated in me? For just as Adam was in the hour of his singing praise, and the serpent came, and found Eve alone, and completely deceived her, so it has happened to me also. And Joseph stood up from the sackcloth, and called Mary, and said to her: O thou who hast been cared for by God, why hast thou done this and forgotten the Lord thy God? Why hast thou brought low thy soul, thou that wast brought up in the holy of holies, and that didst receive food from the hand of an angel? And she wept bitterly, saying: I am innocent, and have known no man. And Joseph said to her: Whence then is that which is in thy womb? And she said: As the Lord my God liveth, I do not know whence it is to me.

14. And Joseph was greatly afraid, and retired from her, and considered what he should do in regard to her. And Joseph

said: If I conceal her sin, I find myself fighting against the law of the Lord; and if I expose her to the sons of Israel, I am afraid lest that which is in her be from an angel, and I shall be found giving up innocent blood to the doom of death. What then shall I do with her? I will put her away from me secretly. And night came upon him; and, behold, an angel of the Lord appears to him in a dream, saying: Be not afraid for this maiden, for that which is in her is of the Holy Spirit; and she will bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins. And Joseph arose from sleep, and glorified the God of Israel, who had given him this grace; and he kept her.

15. And Annas the scribe came to him, and said: Why hast thou not appeared in our assembly? And Joseph said to him: Because I was weary from my journey, and rested the first day. And he turned, and saw that Mary was with child. And he ran away to the priest? and said to him: Joseph, whom thou didst vouch for, has committed a grievous crime. And the priest said: How so? And he said: He has defiled the virgin whom he received out of the temple of the Lord, and has married her by stealth, and has not revealed it to the sons of Israel. And the priest answering, said: Has Joseph done this? Then said Annas the scribe: Send officers, and thou wilt find the virgin with child. And the officers went away, and found it as he had said; and they brought her along with Joseph to the tribunal. And the priest said: Mary, why hast thou done this? and why hast thou brought thy soul low, and forgotten the Lord thy God? Thou that wast reared in the holy of holies, and that didst receive food from the hand of an angel, and didst hear the hymns, and didst dance before Him, why hast thou done this? And she wept bitterly, saying: As the Lord my God liveth, I am pure before Him, and know not a man. And the priest said to Joseph: Why hast thou done this? And Joseph said: As the Lord liveth, I am pure concerning her. Then said the priest: Bear

not false witness, but speak the truth. Thou hast married her by stealth, and hast not revealed it to the sons of Israel, and hast not bowed thy head under the strong hand, that thy seed might be blessed. And Joseph was silent.

16. And the priest said: Give up the virgin whom thou didst receive out of the temple of the Lord. And Joseph burst into tears. And the priest said: I will give you to drink of the water of the ordeal of the Lord, and He shall make manifest your sins in your eyes. And the priest took the water, and gave Joseph to drink and sent him away to the hill-country; and he returned unhurt. And he gave to Mary also to drink, and sent her away to the hill-country; and she returned unhurt. And all the people wondered that sin did not appear in them. And the priest said: If the Lord God has not made manifest your sins, neither do I judge you. And he sent them away. And Joseph took Mary, and went away to his own house, rejoicing and glorifying the God of Israel.

17. And there was an order from the Emperor Augustus, that all in Bethlehem of Judaea should be enrolled. And Joseph said: I shall enrol my sons, but what shall I do with this maiden? How shall I enrol her? As my wife? I am ashamed. As my daughter then? But all the sons of Israel know that she is not my daughter. The day of the Lord shall itself bring it to pass as the Lord will. And he saddled the ass, and set her upon it; and his son led it, and Joseph followed. And when they had come within three miles, Joseph turned and saw her sorrowful; and he said to himself: Likely that which is in her distresses her. And again Joseph turned and saw her laughing. And he said to her: Mary, how is it that I see in thy face at one time laughter, at another sorrow? And Mary said to Joseph: Because I see two peoples with my eyes; the one weeping and lamenting, and the other rejoicing and exulting. And they came into the middle of the road, and Mary said to him: Take me down from off the ass, for that

which is in me presses to come forth. And he took her down from off the ass, and said to her: Whither shall I lead thee, and cover thy disgrace? for the place is desert.

18. And he found a cave there, and led her into it; and leaving his two sons beside her, he went out to seek a widwife in the district of Bethlehem. And I Joseph was walking, and was not walking; and I looked up into the sky, and saw the sky astonished; and I looked up to the pole of the heavens, and saw it standing, and the birds of the air keeping still. And I looked down upon the earth, and saw a trough lying, and work-people reclining: and their hands were in the trough. And those that were eating did not eat, and those that were rising did not carry it up, and those that were conveying anything to their mouths did not convey it; but the faces of all were looking upwards. And I saw the sheep walking, and the sheep stood still; and the shepherd raised his hand to strike them, and his hand remained up. And I looked upon the current of the river, and I saw the mouths of the kids resting on the water and not drinking, and all things in a moment were driven from their course.

19. And I saw a woman coming down from the hill-country, and she said to me: O man, whither art thou going? And I said: I am seeking an Hebrew midwife. And she answered and said unto me: Art thou of Israel? And I said to her: Yes. And she said: And who is it that is bringing forth in the cave? And I said: A woman betrothed to me. And she said to me: Is she not thy wife? And I said to her: It is Mary that was reared in the temple of the Lord, and I obtained her by lot as my wife. And yet she is not my wife, but has conceived of the Holy Spirit. And the widwife said to him: Is this true? And Joseph said to her: Come and see. And the midwife went away with him. And they stood in the place of the cave, and behold a luminous cloud overshadowed the cave. And the midwife said: My soul has been magnified this day, because

mine eyes have seen strange things — because salvation has been brought forth to Israel. And immediately the cloud disappeared out of the cave, and a great light shone in the cave, so that the eyes could not bear it. And in a little that light gradually decreased, until the infant appeared, and went and took the breast from His mother Mary. And the midwife cried out, and said: This is a great day to me, because I have seen this strange sight. And the midwife went forth out of the cave, and Salome met her. And she said to her: Salome, Salome, I have a strange sight to relate to thee: a virgin has brought forth — a thing which her nature admits not of. Then said Salome: As the Lord my God liveth, unless I thrust in my finger, and search the parts, I will not believe that a virgin has brought forth.

20. And the midwife went in, and said to Mary: Show thyself; for no small controversy has arisen about thee. And Salome put in her finger, and cried out, and said: Woe is me for mine iniquity and mine unbelief, because I have tempted the living God; and, behold, my hand is dropping off as if burned with fire. And she bent her knees before the Lord, saying: O God of my fathers, remember that I am the seed of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob; do not make a show of me to the sons of Israel, but restore me to the poor; for Thou knowest, O Lord, that in Thy name I have performed my services, and that I have received my reward at Thy hand. And, behold, an angel of the Lord stood by her, saying to her: Salome, Salome, the Lord hath heard thee. Put thy hand to the infant, and carry it, and thou wilt have safety and joy. And Salome went and carried it, saying: I will worship Him, because a great King has been born to Israel. And, behold, Salome was immediately cured, and she went forth out of the cave justified. And behold a voice saying: Salome, Salome, tell not the strange things thou hast seen, until the child has come into Jerusalem.

21. And, behold, Joseph was ready to go into Judaea. And there was a great commotion in Bethlehem of Judaea, for Magi came, saying: Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and have come to worship him. And when Herod heard, he was much disturbed, and sent officers to the Magi. And he sent for the priests, and examined them, saying: How is it written about the Christ? where is He to be born? And they said: In Bethlehem of Judaea, for so it is written. And he sent them away. And he examined the Magi, saying to them: What sign have you seen in reference to the king that has been born? And the Magi said: We have seen a star of great size shining among these stars, and obscuring their light, so that the stars did not appear; and we thus knew that a king has been born to Israel, and we have come to worship him. And Herod said: Go and seek him; and if you find him, let me know, in order that I also may go and worship him. And the Magi went out. And, behold, the star which they had seen in the east went before them until they came to the cave, and it stood over the top of the cave. And the Magi saw the infant with His mother Mary; and they brought forth from their bag gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned by the angel not to go into Judaea, they went into their own country by another road.

22. And when Herod knew that he had been mocked by the Magi, in a rage he sent murderers, saying to them: Slay the children from two years old and under. And Mary, having heard that the children were being killed, was afraid, and took the infant and swaddled Him, and put Him into an ox-stall. And Elizabeth, having heard that they were searching for John, took him and went up into the hill-country, and kept looking where to conceal him. And there was no place of concealment. And Elizabeth, groaning with a loud voice, says: O mountain of God, receive mother and child. And immediately the mountain was cleft, and received her. And a

light shone about them, for an angel of the Lord was with them, watching over them.

23. And Herod searched for John, and sent officers to Zacharias, saying: Where hast thou hid thy son? And he, answering, said to them: I am the servant of God in holy things, and I sit constantly in the temple of the Lord: I do not know where my son is. And the officers went away, and reported all these things to Herod. And Herod was enraged, and said: His son is destined to be king over Israel. And he sent to him again, saying: Tell the truth; where is thy son? for thou knowest that thy life is in my hand. And Zacharias said: I am God's martyr, if thou sheddest my blood; for the Lord will receive my spirit, because thou sheddest innocent blood at the vestibule of the temple of the Lord. And Zacharias was murdered about daybreak. And the sons of Israel did not know that he had been murdered.

24. But at the hour of the salutation the priests went away, and Zacharias did not come forth to meet them with a blessing, according to his custom. And the priests stood waiting for Zacharias to salute him at the prayer, and to glorify the Most High. And he still delaying, they were all afraid. But one of them ventured to go in, and he saw clotted blood beside the altar; and he heard a voice saying: Zacharias has been murdered, and his blood shall not be wiped up until his avenger come. And hearing this saying, he was afraid, and went out and told it to the priests. And they ventured in, and saw what had happened; and the fretwork of the temple made a wailing noise, and they rent their clothes from the top even to the bottom. And they found not his body, but they found his blood turned into stone. And they were afraid, and went out and reported to the people that Zacharias had been murdered. And all the tribes of the people heard, and mourned, and lamented for him three days and three nights. And after the three days,

the priests consulted as to whom they should put in his place; and the lot fell upon Simeon. For it was he who had been warned by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death until he should see the Christ in the flesh.

And I James that wrote this history in Jerusalem, a commotion having arisen when Herod died, withdrew myself to the wilderness until the commotion in Jerusalem ceased, glorifying the Lord God, who had given me the gift and the wisdom to write this history. And grace shall be with them that fear our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory to ages of ages. Amen.

About This EBook

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